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THE

RELIGION

OF THE

IRANIAN PEOPLES

BY

C. P. TIELE

Part I.

103031

(*From the German*)

WITH

DARMESTETER'S SKETCH OF "PERSIA"

AND

GOLDZIHER'S "INFLUENCE OF PARSISM ON ISLAM"

(*From the French*)

Translated by

G. K. NARIMAN

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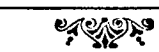

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

"I have studied your religion for now forty years and my interest in it has not diminished." So Dr. Tiele wrote to me in 1902 when I had asked his permission to translate into English his history of the Religion of the Iranian Peoples from its German version, the original Dutch being beyond me. There is hardly a line in his writings which the learned author has given us but is supported by the Avesta. It was my intention, therefore, to give a full translation of all the passages relied on by Dr. Tiele and of cource I could not have derived better help from any English source than the *Sacred Books of the East.* I therefore intimated my project to Professor Tiele, who courteously replied :

"When you draw on the *Sacred Books of the East* which means the translation of Darmesteter, when you think to give the quoted passages in full, you will allow my remodelling some, perhaps most of them, as I think D's translation is not to be trusted, though there is not a scholar in the world who knew the Avesta so thoroughly as he did. It was his system that spoilt his translation."

Professor James Darmesteter to whom our community is indebted for more than a complete rendering of our scriptures in a European language[1] erred in holding that the whole of our Avesta writings are not older than the Sasanian period in the form in which they have been transmitted to us and that they betray foreign influences, Brahmanical, Buddhist, Greek and Jewish. This hypothesis has been challenged and refuted by a number of brilliant savants, by none more exhaustively than Tiele, (*Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 1894); by West, (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1893); by [2] Geldner. (*Grundriss der iranischen Philologie*); twice by Max Müller (*Contemporary*

[1] Besides the monumental Guimet *Zend Avesta* in French we owe him two Vols. (IV and XXIII) in the S. B. E.

[2] Geldner's unsurpassed survey of Avesta Literature has been done into English by Dr. Mackichan of Bombay in the Dastur Peshohan Memorial Volume.

Review, 1893 and *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1895), and by the scholarly representative of our community, Shams-ul-Ulma J. J. Modi, whose paper read before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1896 was reproduced in a French rendering by the appreciative conductors of the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*.

Soon after the receipt of the letter from Professor Tiele, to my great sorrow, I heard of his death.[1]

The great value of the work of Tiele is centered in sound brevity. Just as he has written no sentence for which there is not ample warrant, so also there is not a superfluous paragraph. But while extreme terseness has been attempted by many of his confreres, in literary merit our author far surpasses the latter whose scientific compilations are so many catalogues of dry data and bald inferences.[2] Dr. Tiele was anxious to see his book read by the Parsis and the main portion of the book is in the first instance intended for our community. And it is produced before them with some confidence.

It is easy to indulge in cheap sarcasm at the expence of the much-motoring, much-beclubbing, theatre-going, racing, sporting section of the latter-day Parsis to whom a book on philological and religious antiquities is bound to prove a violent soporific. It is truer to point to the growing number of men whose scholarship has entitled them to rank among Western researchers.[3] Indeed the sounder view would appear to prevail that our scholarship has outgrown our material prosperity. And this brings me to the *raison d' etre* of this translation.

[1] Justi spoke of Tiele's "profound knowledge of the Zarathushtrian religion," *Grundriss der iran. Philologie*, iii, 437. In his *Zoroaster* our Prof. Jackson refers to this "excellent volume" of Tiele's. p. XV.

[2] *E. g.* Hermann Ethe's otherwise most exhaustive study of Modern Persian Literature in the same *Grundriss*.

[3] The work of the Gatha Society of Bombay, for instance, is inspired by a single-hearted devotion to Zoroastrian learning and the Society, as a body, has reached a depth of critical study achieved by scarcely half a dozen scholars of Bombay fifteen years ago.

There has been a great demand for what passes for "originality" and a corresponding disparagement of translations from languages generally unknown to the Parsis. Nothing would have been easier than to have put together an "original" work with the help of the wealth of material at the translator's disposal. Nevertheless he believes it to be more honest, and hopes it to prove of greater utility, to render accessible to the generality of his people a standard production of genuine original investigation in a foreign tongue than to piece together a farrago of questionable authority in English or Gujarati.

This is the first part of Tiele's work. The second part is ready for the press. I have taken the liberty to reserve for the second part most of the author's learned footnotes which, together with a brief life of the author, a complete index and bibliography, may be expected to appear shortly. Each chapter is complete in itself and may be read independently of the rest of the book.

As a community, the Parsis have never ceased entirely to be interested in Iran. The English[4] rendering of the small sketch of Persia, by James Darmesteter is a contribution to that revived regard for the old unhappy country from which the ancestors of some at least among us have immigrated into India. The sketch is a chip from a master's workshop. Twenty-five years ago, Darmesteter had a prevision of what it is apprehended, at least in Persia, is about to come to pass.*

While Tiele's book may interest the Parsis and the Hindus to whose common ancestors the author devotes more than one chapter, Professor Goldziher's almost pioneer essay will, it is hoped, appeal to the progressive Musalmans as well, at least to that portion of the virile community with which we are bound by ethnic ties.[5] I was struck with the amount of Iranian

[4] It appeared first in the *Indian Spectator*.

[5] Besides the bulk of the modern Persians being still Aryan, it is an article of faith in Persia that Husain the son of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, was married to Shahrbanu the daughter of the last Sasanian monarch Yezdegerd III.

* Now see Dr. Albrecht Werth's reflections translated by me in *the Parsi*, May 14, 1911 from his *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart*, p. 294, ff.

contribution to Arabic culture long before the sympathetic works of Browne, and Nicholson, and Huart made it common knowledge.[6] Adequate treatment, however, of the Pahlavi sources of Arab writers ; of the Shuubiya sect who openly asserted the superiority of all that was connected with ancient Iran, including some times even the religion, as against the newly established institutions of Islam ; of the large amount of incidental information embalmed in pre-Moslem poetry especially the *Aghani*, depicting the daily life of the Sasanian Persian,—this would require a volume by itself.[7]

[6] Justi's *Iranisches Namenbuch* is a storehouse of interesting information on the subject (*e.g.*, The Moslem formula of Bismillah introductory to any subject has occupied the place of the Iranian *Khshnaothra Ahurahe Mazda*, p. vi).

[7] There is no doubt that Persia before Islam was rent by internal dissentions and ripe for a fall, still it is scarcely credible as some writers have sought to prove (*e.g.*, Arnold in his *Preaching of Islam*, chap. vi.), that force and persecution contributed nothing to the wholesale conversion of Persia to Islam ; though there is strong evidence that the most remorseless enemies of Zoroastrian Persians were not so much the pure Arabs as the Iranians who had embraced the new faith or their hybrid progeny. Under the Umayyads a special officer was appointed, whose duty it was to annihilate fire-temples throughout Persia (Von Kremer, *Culturgeschite* ii., 64). Van Vloten has ably established that the Arab chroniclers were indifferent to the miseries of the native population of whose sufferings they give us most meagre accounts and that under the Umayyads it was not a question of a religious propaganda at all but only of more or less systematic pillage (*La dominion Arabe, etc.*, p. 12). For an instance of the revolt and death of a declared Zoroastrian, Sumbadh, so early as A. D. 755, see A. Muller's *Islam im Morgen und Abendland* i., 494. Goldziher's masterly *Muhammad Studien*, which has been so copiously drawn upon by all succeeding writers—he did not know that a whole chapter of his on *Hadith and New Testament* was translated into English till I sent him a copy of the book—abounds in references to Perso-Arab relations. See also Johnson's *Muallakat*, p. 225 (reference to Persian armour) and Neldeke, *Beitrage zur Kentness der Poesie der Alten Araber* (reference to the dread Persian cavalry), p. 58.

That the Shahname of Firdausi entirely rests on a Pahlavi basis has now been fully recognised and the Pahlavi source of many Arab writers on Persia is equally established (see my *National Epic of Iran* in the *Calcutta Review*, October 1904 and Noeldeke's introduction to his *Geschite der Persee under Araber zur zeit der Sasaniden*, a history of unsurpassed erudition but totally devoid of sympathy with Persia. An incontrovertible

The points of contact between Parsism and Buddhism to which I have called attention may claim at least in English to be perhaps the first presentment of the subject founded on a direct comparative study of the sacred books of both the religions in their original languages. Generally speaking, the Pali books are considered to represent the oldest phase of Buddhism and Sanskrit the later developments. Nevertheless, I would prefer to err in the company of Professor Sylvain Levi than be in the right with half a dozen specialists of narrower horizon.[8] I have accordingly sought for my parallels in books of both the schools.

It is impossible to conceive two religious systems more diametrically opposed than Buddhism and Parsism; but it is this general antithesis which invests for the dispassionate student the similarities in detail with a heightened fascination.* And speaking of comparative study, much as I would eschew a polemical strain, it is difficult to refrain from observing that no unselfish seeker after truth but must greatly deplore the wrongs that the true scientific interpretation of all religions, and these ancient faiths of India and Iran in particular, have to suffer at the hands of their common enemy, who possessed with a preposterous hallucination of universal brotherhood pretend to reconcile their radically conflicting tenets. To make Gautama the Buddha a strict vegetarian when he put little restraint on animal food[9], when he ate freely of it, and when as

testimony to the Pahlavi originals of Arab historians like Tabari is their occasional Persian phraseology and words like Hazarpat, Hazarbanda, Herbadan, Herbad, Aswar, Padan, Dihkan, of not only secular but religious origin in which their works abound. I have translated Nöeldeke's Introduction for Dr. Dhala's *Asha* (January 1911).

[8] See my *Rivals of the Pali Buddhist Canon* Englished from Prof. Levi's monograph in the *Rangoon Gazette*, June 1, 1910.

[9] The Pali *Pitakas* are there to convince the most sceptical. See Rhys Davids' *Buddhism*, p. 131. The most thorough recent contribution on the subject is by Otto Schrader *On Ahimsa and Vegetarianism mainly in Buddhism*, in the Ceylon National Review, January 1910.

* See my Buddhist parallels to Parsi humata-hukhta-huvarashta, *Indian Antiquary*, December 1911

a matter of religious tradition, handed down from hoary antiquity and believed by millions to-day, his last meal in this life consisted of tender pork ;[10] to make of him the expounder of an esoteric philosophy when he frankly repudiated all that was occult and suspicious and secret[11] ; to misrepresent him as the master and practitioner of supernatural potencies when he unequivocally denounced them as unworthy of saintly pursuit ;[12] to establish him a leader of psychological subtleties when with unparallelled candour he categorically declined to answer the fixed fourteen questions relating to existence after death,[13]—these are but a few of the ways in respect of a single religion adopted by laymen masquerading as expounders of ancient wisdom and secret doctrines.*

There is a sense of religious belief of great intensity among the Parsis still. But the beginner is sometimes apt to be discouraged by the monotony and repetitions of some of our texts. For him I would preface any translation of a certain portion of the Avesta with the words employed by the Chinese translator of the Sanskrit Buddhistic scriptures in introducing the word of

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[10] See *Mahaparinibbana-Sutta* translated in the *Sacred Books of the East*. Vol. xi, 41. There is only one scholar of eminence who objects to the *Sukara-maddava* (equal to Sanskrit *sukara mardava*) being translated as tender boar's flesh, Neumann. *Die Reden Gotamo Buddho's aus der mittleren sammlung Majjhimanikayo*, p. xix.

[11] This has been exposed by Rhys Davids in his *American Lectures* on Buddhism, 1902, at p. 211.

[12] In the 11th Sutta of the *Dighanikaya*: the Buddha says ; It is because I see the danger in miracles of psychical power and of mind-reading that I detest, abhor, and despise them.

[13] This is the theme of many of the Buddha's discourses but see the special dictionaries of Buddhistic technical terms, *Maha-vyutpatti* 206 ; *Dharmasangraha* (Anecdota Oxoniensa) and the illuminating note at p. 67.

* How far their heretical views about incarnation, Boundless Time, &c., as applied to the Avesta, do violence to the Parsi holy writ, will be demonstrated further in the second Part.

the Buddha to the millions of China. In that preface I would only substitute Zoroaster for the Buddha:

"The words of the Buddha are holy words, not merely elegant or tasteful and his Law is not designed to attract persons by its pleasing character but by its deep and spiritual meaning."†

Whatever there may be in the following pages calculated to stimulate a deeper and more catholic study not only of the Parsi religion but of the history of the centuries of its beneficent influence and the interaction of cognate beliefs must be ascribed to Sir Richard Temple, Bart., editor of the *Indian Antiquary*, who steadily encouraged, to the enlightened broad-mindedness of Sir Shapurji B. Bharucha, and the Trustees of the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhai Translation Fund who have subsidized, and to Shams-ul-Ulma J. J. Modi who has given indispensable practical assistance in the publication of this volume. Its defects are patent to me. They are not likely to be more evident to the most critical and therefore the most obliging reader.

G. K. N.

† Beal's Chinese *Dhammapada*, p. 35. Perfectly applicable to the Zoroastrian gospel are the further remarks of the devout Chinese. "The meaning of these *Gathas* is sometimes very obscure and men say that there is no meaning at all in them. But let them consider that as it is difficult to meet with a teacher like Buddha, so the words of Buddha are naturally hard of explanation." (Note that Gatha has the same meaning of scripture verse in both the creeds.)

Rangoon, July, 1911.

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THE RELIGION OF THE IRANIAN PEOPLES.

CHAPTER I.

SOURCES.

Very abundant are the writings out of which one may learn to study the **Mazdayasnian religion** as it flourished under the sway of the Sassanides, and has since to the present day been preserved in a few districts of Persia, but above all in Western India. Before the *Avesta* became known in Europe, we had to content ourselves with these and with the reports of the classical authors for an acquaintance with **Zoroastrianism**. At the close of the seventeenth century, the erudite professor at Oxford, Thomans Hyde, essayed on the basis of these sources, and preponderatingly on the more recent ones, an account of the religion of the ancient Persians, Parthians and Medians.[1] It goes without saying that the founts of our information comprise much that is old, that they communicate to us many a tradition and depict for us many customs which have existed for centuries. But what is old in them and what of a later date can be positively ascertained only by means of a comparative exposition of the most primitive of the indigenous records. One is warrented in the surmise that considerably more of them could be proved as archaic and original, if we possessed the *Avesta* in its entirety, or at least a greater portion of it than the present fragmentary remnants. However, on such surmises no history can be constructed; accordingly we shall leave them out of account and employ them only occasionally to elucidate facts of historical validity. As authentic sources for the period with which we are exclusively concerned they are of little utility.

[1] *Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum Eorumque Magorum*, Oxon. 1700.

The sources from which to build a history of the religion of the Persian or Iranian peoples, previous to the fall of the Achæmenide empire, are relatively scanty; though this paucity of imaterials is outweighed by the superior significance of the most important of them, the *Avesta*, which embodies, most of the telics of **the sacred scripture of the Zarathushtrians** in the original language. A few fragments discovered in the last decades, and which were not comprised in the ordinary canon, decidedly belong to these sacred writings. We must here content ourselves with a cursory notice of this main fountain of our information. Another chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the contents, the dates, the character and the history of these books. Besides these we have, though of subsidiary importance for our knowledge of the religion, the **inscriptions** of the later Achæmenide dynasty, of which the most prominent was discovered at Behishtân in Media, and at Persepolis and Naksh-i-Rustum in Persia proper. They are composed in old Persian, a tongue which is indeed different from that of the *Avesta*, but closely allied to it. Moreover, most of them are accompanied by a translation in modern Susian, in which we see with greater probability the tongue of Elam or Susiana in the times of the Achæmenides. The core of its contents is not of a religious, but of a historical nature. Still the monarchs confess to their faith in **Ahuramazda, the mighty God**, and impute to his grace their domination and their triumphs. Their professions are more emphatic and less effusive than those of the kings of Assur, Babel, or Egypt, when they glorify their gods. Multifold data for a description of the Iranian creed of yore are derived from the *Bundhish*, a composition in Pehlvi, the language of the Sassanian era. And if the hypothesis enunciated by the Coryphaeus of Pehlvi savant, E. W. West, turns out correct; namely, that this work is a rendering or a manipulated version of the *Damdat Nask*, one of the lost books of the *Avesta*, there is no objection to our making such use of the book. No one will deny that much of what it is composed of is of remote antiquity. But the redaction which we possess dates at the

earliest from the 9th century of the Christian era, from an age in which Sassanian rule had long before come to an end, and when **Mazdayasnianism** was no more the state-religion. Even if the *Damdat Nask* formed the ground-work of the book, it is at all events no exact translation of it. Let alone the allusions to the Arabs, which may be later accretions, it includes so much that could issue from the Sassanian times alone, that we should act uncautiously, did we assume the rest as testimony to the religious conceptions of the centuries which preceded Alexander. An off-hand sifting of the evidence is out of the question. We shall therefore not draw upon this source. The same applies in an increased measure to the other Pehlvi works, whose value for the interpretation of the *Avesta* we are not inclined to dispute; while we cannot consider them as original documents for the investigation of the religion of our period.

The solitary contemporary of the Achæmenides among the Hellenic writers, who relates something about the religion of the Persians, is **Herodotus.** His friend **Ktesias,** who was physician at the court of Persia, had the fairest opportunity of instructing his quondam countrymen in the predominant faith in his land of adoption. Perhaps he did write on the subject, but the fragments of his works preserved to us to-day do not deal with religion. When we reflect, however, how little reliance he merits respecting his historical narratives and likewise regarding the little that he says about the creed of the Babylonians and the Assyrians, that is probably not much to be deplored Herodotus[2] gives a comparatively exhaustive account of the religion and usages of the Persians, which very probably concern the Medians too. Whether he personally visited Persia, which is not certain, or learnt of the home and the history of the Persians only through the Persians of Asia Minor, which is more likely,—in either case he depicts the circumstances as they obtained at the time of Artaxerxes I, about the middle of the fifth century B. C. Had he got to make use of older Greek sources, his portrayal would refer to a somewhat preceding age. But we have no sufficient grounds for this conjecture.

[2] Book I, 131-140.

This much is confirmed: what he records is produced neither by himself nor by his authority from the sacred literature of Persia. It is the result of personal or second-hand observation and oral communication,—not the official doctrine of priestly schools, but the every-day practice, which, as a matter of course, is to some extent divergent from the prescriptions and ideals of the theologians. This before all must be borne in mind in estimating the worth of his portrayal, which must not be branded as falsehood when it seems to contradict the latter, but which at the same time does not argue a different time and a different sphere for the origin of the *Avesta*. The coincidences between the *Avesta* and Herodotus are too many for us to doubt that he actually has in mind **the Zarathushtrian religion**. But he is not uniformly accurate. What he asserts about the Persian names[3] shows that here he misses the meaning of his authority, and when he holds Mithra[4] for a female divinity, whom the Persians had assimilated from the Arabs, it is manifest that he has misunderstood him. Such discrepancies, however, are easily emended, and no reasons are forthcoming why we should refuse to credit his accounts. On the contrary, they supply a valuable means of inquiry into the tenets of the Zarathushtrian religion, as already accepted in general under the Achæmenides.

It is much to be deplored that the works of **Theopompos** have perished beyond recall. In the eighth book of his *Philippina*, this contemporary of Philippus and Alexander, handles the **Magian teachings**. In connection with the tradition of the Parsis that Alexander had the holy writings of Zarathushtrianism translated into Greek, which is not certainly to be literally understood, it would be of immense consequence to know what Theopompos had read or heard of the precepts contained in them. **Plutarch** was cognisant of his work and consulted it. He cites him where he recounts the successive world epochs, which the Persians admitted, and with reference to the conflict between Aromazdes and Areimanios and the annihilation of the latter. Probably he is beholden to the same authority for his careful

[3] Chap. 139. [4] Chap. 131.

account of **Zarathushtrian theology** which he presents in the same work.[5]

It must be, then, that he derived his information from **Hermippos**, a contemporary of Ptolemaios Euergetes (247-22 B. C.), of whom Pliny[6] assures us that he had studied the precepts of the Persians from their own books, and had published a detailed account of the two million verses which they contained. Hermippos' work, too, is hopelessly lost, to the incalculable detriment of the history of Mazdayasnian religion. Not so much because we would have learnt what is conspicuously absent in the archaic and the recent autochthonous sources, but because from it we should have derived what was already in vogue among the Zarathushtrians, and because it would have shed considerable light on the question of the date of the *Avesta*.

On this account it is that the report of **Diogenes Laertius**[7] (who also cites Theopompos) that Eudoxos, the contemporary of Plato, and Aristotle knew the doctrine of the conflict of Zeus-Oromazdes and Hades-Areimanios, is of the greatest moment despite its brevity.

Strabo,[8] belonging to the first century B. C., also deserves mention, since what he relates from his own experience of the

[5] *De Iside et Osiride*, c. 46-47. The explanation he gives with regard to, to the four out of the six Ameshaspends is tolerably correct; but he has not quite understood Haurvatat and Ameretat. His account of the 24 of the gods of Oromazdes' creation hiding themselves in an egg, which is broken by as many counter-creations of Areimanios, has so far found no corroboration in any old Zarathushtrian text. For a notion in the later writings harmonizing with this idea, see Windischmann: *Zoroastrische Studien*, p. 281.

[6] *Histori Naturalis* XXX. 1. To Windischmann the two million seems an exaggeration, and, instead of *vicies centum milia versuum*, he would read *vicies dena milia versuum*. He indicates that the 200,000 lines tolerably correspond to what is related of the bulk of the *Avesta* during the times of the Sassanides. I, too would not answer for the accuracy of the two million. But the Sassanian *Zend Avesta* was held to be merely a remnant of the richer literature which existed at the time of Alexander.

[7] *Prooemium*, 6 and 9.

[8] Besides Book XI. 8, 4. Comp. specially Book XV., and here, *inter alia*, 1, 14; 3, 1; 4, 7 *et seq.*; before all 3, 13 *seq.*

Persian rites among the Cappadocians is essentially pertinent, notwithstanding that he obviously draws upon other writers, in part even upon Herodotus.

Finally, **Pausanias**[9] solitary allusion to the customs of the Magians is in tolerable accord with what we learn from the *Avesta*.

For the rest, we are contend to allude to the not yet antiquated monograph of Fr. Windischmann[10] on the passages from the ancients bearing on Zarathushtrianism; though we are unable to subscribe to the genuineness of the fragment of the dialogues ascribed to Lydus and Plato, to which he refers.

[9] V. 27, 2 and 3.

[10] "*Stellen der Alten Uber Zoroastrisches*," in his *Zoroastrische Studien*, p. 260-313. [For an English translation of this important work, *vide* Dastur Darab's *Zarathushtra in the Gathas and in the Classics*.—TR.]

CHAPTER II.

THE SACRED WRITINGS.

1. THE ZEND-AVESTA OF THE SASSANIDES.

The history of the Mazdayasnian religion for a good part coincides with that of the sacred scriptures of the Zarathushtrians. Consequently we must first make a closer acquaintance of these writings. The greater portion thereof has perished. As has been already stated, a rich Zarathushtrian literature existed when Alexander subverted the Persian Empire, and on which Hermippos, among others, drew for the material of his work. According to the Parsi tradition, to which we shall revert in the sequel, the Greek invader consigned to flames some of the books, some he had despatched to his home; and only the Arsaccides and subsequently the Sassanides (A. D. 226-636) are credited with having collected the remnants. It is certain that under the domination of the Sassanides a canon or a holy writ was in vogue embodying the ancient text, **Avesta, with its Commentary or Zend,** and usually on these grounds passing under the name of the **Zend-Avesta**. This canon fell into twenty-one *nasks* or books, of which in the 9th Christian century twenty were still extant in the original tongue, nineteen in the Pahlavi translation with elucidatory glosses. Even this collection no more exists. **It is extinct not exactly because of the irruption of Islam**—by the 9th century it had long been in the ascendent—but only later under the Tartar sovereignty, owing to unfavourable times and the supineness and ignorance of the delievers. The ensuing sections of this Chapter are devoted to the *débris* of this body of writings.

It might seem that a discussion of the **Zend-Avesta of the Sassanides** does not belong to our investigation, inasmuch as we do not pursue our research farther than down to Alexander the Great. But that is not so in fact. The *Avesta*

had it been preserved to us intact, would have served as a source only, with certain reservations, for a knowledge of the Zarathushtrian religion prior to the fall of the Achæmenides. However much the more ancient ingredients were worked up into the spirit of the times and edited anew, still archaic writings are incorporated with it and constitute its pith and marrow. It is, therefore, pertinent to enquire what we can learn about them, if only that some desirable light may be shed upon what remains to us of the original texts.

On the contents of the Sassanide *Zend-Avesta* more or less complete information is afforded by the **the Dinkart**, a composition in Pahlavi and dating from the 9th century A. D. The author seems to have had before him the original as well as the translation, with the exception mentioned above. To him only the latter version was intelligible. The former, the original text, was to him a book with seven seals. This is to be concluded from the fact that he has nothing to say concerning the contents of the one *nask*, which he possessed in the old language, but not in the Pahlavi rendering. What he, therefore, furnishes us is confined solely to excerpts from the version with all its inaccuracies, periphrasis, *scholia* and later additions. The abstracts at all events seem to be correct. Any way, the synopsis of the contents of the *Vendidad*, which the author presents is in tolerable accord with the prototype. But details touching the period of the Sassanides, and here and there allusions to the Arabs, crop up, so that it is well to regard as old only what harmonizes with the dogma of the primitive texts, so far as they have come down to us.

The *Dinkart* contains two classifications of the 21 books, of which neither can be original. One divides them into three classes, to each of which belongs seven *Nasks* ; seven Gathic, seven Hadha-Manthraic and seven legal works. This division is but partially in consonance with the contents of the books. From the writers own words it is evident that, properly speaking, not more than four books appertain to the *Gathas*, that not more than five can claim the designation of juristic works, so

that in point of fact all the rest must be regarded or at least characterized as *Hadha-Manthraic* or miscellaneous. The second classification is a theological triviality, according to which each *Nask* corresponds to one of the twenty-one words of the **Ahuna Vaerya Prayer**, which is the "fount of the fountains of religion." Perhaps more authentic, and, at any rate, more rational sequence, is that in which almost all the Persian *Revayâts* enumerate the books and which we shall follow in our rapid survey of the *Zend-Avesta*.

At the head stands the **Stot-Yasht, Staota Yesnya**, which at present is wholly embraced in the *Yesna* and comprises the most archaic litanies, the *Gâthas*, along with other ancient texts. Rightly does West, the leader of Pahlavi scholars, remark that the *Stot-Yasht*, and especially the *Gâthas*, form the central point round which all *Nask* are ranged, and that these texts in the Sassanian epoch were neither larger nor smaller than now. Perhaps they may be better styled **the foundation on which all the rest reposes.**

The three *Nasks*, which immediately come after, are or should be *scholia* on the *Gâthas* and the oldest prayers. The first of these, **the Sutkar**, can be so called only arbitrarily. I would hesitate to call this *Nasks* a collection of homilies after the type of the *Gâthas*, notwithstanding it may be urged in extenuation that "homilies do indeed at times digress far from the text." In truth, so far at least as we can judge from the table of contents the *Dinkart* presents, several chapters have not the slightest bearing on the litanies with which tradition associates them.[11] **The Varstmansar** has much more of commentary. It is arranged not only in order of the prayers and psalms preceded by a prelude recounting the miraculous birth of Zarathushtra, but actually keeps to what we find in the corresponding passages of the Pahlavi *Yasna*;[12] though occasionally it deals with

[11] Comp. *e. g* in *Dinkart* IX. Chap. 6, which should belong to *Yasna* 29, but which makes no mention of Geushurva; or Chap. 7, which treats of something quite other than the two spirits in *Yasna* 30: and so forth.

[12] The following may serve as an illustrative example. In *Fargard* 15 *inter alia khvaetheudata*, marriage between near relatives, is spoken of, and

matter which is touched upon neither in the old texts nor in the version to our knowledge, and although there is mention, naturally in a prophetic manner, of Mani and his followers (A. D. 215 and the subsequent years), and even of the 9th and the 10th century "after the coming of the religion," *i. e.*, according to the native chronology of the 5th and 6th, or even the 6th and 7th, centuries after Christ. If we compared the *Gâthas* in a way with the Vedic *Samhitâ*, this *Nask* would be called a *Brâhmaṇa*. Still more intimately is **the Bako Nask** connected with the *Gâthas* and the appended texts, at least in respect of the sequence. The books do not pretend to be an exhaustive commentary, but the author selects a few sections (*bako*, *bagha*, piece or fragment), to which he superadds his own reflections, making it most difficult for us to ascertain the context.[11] We possess in the original the first three *Fargards* of the *Bako-Nask*, which give a kind of analysis of the three sacred formulæ.[14]

On these properly Gathic books follow seven others of miscellaneous contents, the **Hadha-Manthraic**, which treat of religious ceremonies, customs, legends, myths, of cosmogony and the Mazdayasnian law. The most important of these *Nasks* seems to have been **the Damdat**, "the production of the creation," a sort of genesis of the spiritual and the material world. The book also handles the same theme as **the Bundehish**, a Pahlavi writing of which only a recension of the 9th century has descended to us, and, as noted before, has been the ground-work of the same. Another of these books, **the Vishtasp-Shasto**, is held to have its reflex in the so-called **Vishtasp Yasht**, the original text of which has been preserved.

Ahurmazd himself is cited as an instance. The occasion for this is furnished by a passage in *Yasna* 44, were Spenta Armaiti is called his daughter. This is combined with another myth which denominates her his spouse; and therefrom the conclusion is arrived at that he, like Manu, was married to his own daughter.

[13] Only of these three *Nasks* do we possess to some extent a detailed analysis in *Dinkart* IX.; of all the rest, so far as they were accessible to the author only a summary of contents in *Dinkart* VIII. [11] Especially *Yasna*, 19-21.

If that be so, we have here a somewhat younger writing, embodying, *inter alia*, in a form of instruction imparted by Zarathushtra to king Vishtaspa, the precepts of Mazdayasnianism, defective in structure and not very original.

What was included in **the Vashtap-Nask**, which next comes up, we do not know, since it was lost very early. The two following, **Spend** and **Chithradat**, have this in common, that both deal with legends of saints and prophets; the second, which chronologically should be the first, proceeding from Hoshang to Zarathushtra, the first from Zarathushtra to Shoshyans. **The Bakan Yast Nask** comprised at the lowest fifteen of the *Yashts* which survive in the primitive text. In these *Yashts* the epic stories of Iron occupy prominent position. Then come five books on legislation, of which the last, **the Vendidad**, is extant. Like all law books of antiquity, they relate to a motley farrago of all possible subjects bearing on religion, on civil, on political matters. Nor does the tolerably detailed conspectus of its contents help us to discover a logical sequence. Only we are able to denote the first, *Nikatum*, as a species of penal code, and the fourth, *Sakatum*, as a regulation affecting personal and family concerns. But these general designations would apply to several of these chapters. The question, whether they are the Pahlavi redaction of very archaic texts, does not lend itself to an easy solution. There is much in them which may be ancient, but more of which the contrary is less doubtful. In the synopsis of the contents of the penal code just referred to, there is nothing which may prevent our locating it in the times of the Achæmenides or even earlier. The same in general would hold good of the other, did we not omit to add that they have been reduced to unison with the later social and political exigencies and religious tenets, and that they have been copiously interpolated. Thus, to cite only a few illustrations, what is laid down in the *Ganabasarnijat* with reference to soldiers and their generals need not be of a posterior period. But when in another chapter of this *Nask*, the enemy are depicted as subserving the king of kings and doing homage to the Yazatas, and when they are threatened with death, should

they recalcitrantly decline to adopt the Iranian nationality, we may rest assured that it is the voice of one of the orthodox of the Sassanide times. It is possible to distinguish between the original and the subsequent accretions only when, as in the case of a portion of the juristic book of *Hush param*, the *Avesta* text is also available to us.[15] **Whether these law books were ever enforced** and are founded on legal decisions it is difficult positively to affirm. It is not improbable as regards the Sassanide period; in the epoch with which we are concerned they were perhaps no more than sacred scripture in which the clergy and the theologian had drawn their ideals, while **in public life they exercised no binding authority.**

The whole collection closes with **the Hadokhta Nask**, which, in virtue of its name (*Hadha-Ukhta*), was a supplement to the other texts, and was by consequence composed of heterogeneous materials; but likewise embodied very old ingredients. Various fragments of it have survived in the primitive language, and the name of the *Nask* is cited in the younger *Yashts*.

A conclusion of no small moment, which may be deduced from our exposition, is that **the Gathas, along with the allied texts, occupied the same exalted position in the Zend-Avesta of the Sassanide that they at present hold,** and that then, too, they constituted the quintessence, and were allowed to be the most primeval and sacrosanct documents, of the Zarathushtrian revelation. Moreover, it is obvious that the *Zend-Avesta* comprised neither more nor less Gathic texts than are incorporated into our *Yasna*. This is indicated by the order of the three Gathic *Nasks*, which have the form of *scholia* to the holy formulæ and the *Gâthas*, though they belong to a description of commentary not rare in later centuries too, which obscure more than they illuminate. At all events they show with what reverence the

[15] The contents of two *Fargards* of this *Nask* mostly correspond with the *Nirangistân*, edited and translated by Darmesteter, *Le Zend-Avesta* III. p. 91, *seq.*; but the order of succession is altogether different. Darmesteter, has not observed that the first part of the *Avesta-Nirangistân* has its parallel, not in the *Fargard* of the same name in the *Nask*, but in the preceding one of *Aerpatistân*.

ancient documents were cherished and how the people beheld in them the *fons et origo* of the divine communications.

The most important remnants of the sacred books that were still extant after Alexander, the weightiest before all, for our knowledge of the religion, remain; still we have to deplore the destruction of so many, if of less consequence, writings in their original condition. A greater amount of the Iranian literature of yore would not contribute a little towards the elucidation of its relics. Till then a delimitation of what has come down from antiquity and of the latter-day additions in the Pahlavi and Parsi literature would not be possible. If we had the book of the *Nasks*, *Chitradat* and *Spend*, extant, we should not laboriously have to piece together the fragments of the Iranian epos and the legends of Zarathushtra each into a coherent whole, but should have presented before us synopses of both. From the *Damdat* we should derive an insight into the old Zarathushtrian conception of the creation and the synthesis of the world, which we can but infer from sporadic allusion in the *Avesta* book and vague hypothesis reared on turbid sources. They would better acquaint us with the cult and the priesthood. But we must content ourselves with the salvage from the great shipwreck, and now we have to face the question if we can confidently utilize the *débris*.

CHAPTER III.

THE AVESTA AND ITS COMPONENTS.

Of the one and twenty *Nasks* on which we dwelt in the preceding chapter, we possess, as is reckoned,[16] still two complete ; **Staota Yasnya**[17] **and the Vendidad** ; one well-nigh entire, the **Bakan Yast**, comprising the *Yasts*; the greater part of three more, among them the **Hadokhta Nask** ; and more or less extensive fragments of nine others. They are composed in an ancient Iranian language, a sister-tongue to the old Persian which the Achæmenides employed in their inscriptions, though in two somewhat divergent dialects. Formerly this language was mostly known as the *Zend*, which is indubitably a preposterous designation, inasmuch as no tongue was ever understood by the term *Zend*. Now, as a rule, it is denominated *Avesta*. However, the name Baktrian already used by Benfy and Spiegel seems to me to be still the most appropriate, Baktria being one of the most important lands where this speech was current. **The Avesta or the Sacred Law** was brought to Europe by Aquetel du Perron in the year 1761, after a voyage testifying to an uncommon devotion to science and an iron perseverance, and was tentatively translated by him. Subsequently a few new fragments have come to light.[18] Probably only these remnants are preserved to us because they were employed in the liturgy and had to be chanted in the old language, though they were unintelligible without the auxiliary of a vulgar rendering. The scanty compass of the *Avesta* and the corrupt condition of the texts are no trivial obstacles to its correct interpretation. The first pioneer to pave the way to a scientific exegesis was Eugene

[16] Darmesteter, *Le Zend Avesta*, III., xvi., suiv., and West, *Pahlavi Texts* Part IV., *Sacred Books of the East*, XXXVII., *passim*.

[17] In *Yasna* 14-17, 22-54, and 56.

[18] Collected, edited, and, so far as possible, translated by Darmesteter in Part III. of his *Zend Avesta*.

Burnouf. Since his days, amid no doubt many an aberration, as often as a sound philological method is resorted to, constant advance has been made in the study of Zarathushtrian literature. And so it has become possible to unravel the evolutions of the religion, the pristine documents of which the *Avesta* contains in its main features, and to draw to a certain measure an accurate outline of it. It would not be relevant at this place to sketch the history of the *Avesta* exegesis or to examine the right method for it—an inquiry which cannot be attempted without entering into a discussion of all manner of technical minutiæ. I expect substantial results from none but a critical, philological treatment, which takes into account all writings, whether dating from early or late periods, and in which an intelligent regard for traditional interpretation ensures material assistance. To slavishly follow the latter is an impudent repudiation of all science.

The *Avesta* is made up of five principal constituents. **The Yasna** is exclusively a ritualistic book, in which the texts are arranged in order of the sacrificial operations at which it is recited or sung. The **Vispered**, *Visperatavo*. "*All Lords.*" *i.e.*, the invoked holy ones, is so-called in that it was used in sacrificial ceremonies involving the invocation of all the Lords. **The Vendidad**, the *Vidaeva data*, or what is enacted against the Daevas, the anti-demoniac ordinance, is a law book in twenty-two *Fargards* or Chapters, containing prescriptions, which the pious must observe in order to preserve or recover religious purity ; for without this purity they would fall into the power of the fiends. **The Yashts** represent sacrificial hymns composed, for the most part, *ad majorem gloriam* of the Yazatas, of whom twenty-seven are sacred to the thirty days of the month ; the first fifteenth, and twenty-fifth days of the month had no angels proper to themselves, but served as preludes to the great festivals immediately following, namely, those of Atar, Mithra, and Daena. On these preparatory days were invoked Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas. The fifth and the last division of the *Avesta* embraces a few minor writings, prayers, calendars, and maxims, which conjointly with, or even without, the *Yashts* is comprehensively

denominated the Lesser or *Khorda Avesta*, and is appointed, not for public or priestly, but the private, service of every believer. The solitary book of all these, answering in its totality to a *Nask* of the Sassanide *Avesta*, is the *Vendidad*. The *Yasna* includes the *Stot Yasht Nask—Staota Yasnya*,—but, in combination with three chapters from the *Bako Nask*,[19] three older *Yashts*,[20] some litanies and reiterations, it has been artificially distended to seventy-two *Has* or Sections. Finally, the body of *Yashts* includes the *Bakan* or *Baghan Nask*, which consisted of sixteen such hymns, increased by several more that are posterior, borrowed from other *Nasks* of a dissimilar category.

It is not possible to affirm that any one of these books is *per se* more ancient than the rest. Each has assimilated older and younger elements. Perhaps as a book the *Vendidad* is the most primitive ; the *Yashts* are somewhat a later collection, and at least in their existing form are a composition subsequent to the *Vendidad* and the *Yasna*. If it is not feasible off-hand to point to original passages and latter-day excrescences, we are enabled to pronounce something at least with definitiveness, and we need not despair of more abundant light commensurate to the progress of research.

Thus, in the first place, it has to be remarked that a number of the texts are drawn up in a dialect different from that of the majority. This diversity of dialect is of the essence and cannot be derived from a different mode of writing, as some have sought to show on a baseless theory.[21] Both belong to one and the same language, but either as two dialects, which were spoken in two separate regions, or as in an anterior and a posterior stage of development. The first alternative is well nigh generally accepted, though on inadequate grounds ; the second seems to me to be the most probable one. That the cast of

[19] *Ha* 19 to 21.

[20] These are : the *Hôm-Yasht*, *Ha* 9-11 ; the *Srosh-Yasht*, *Ha* 57 ; the so-called *Maga-Yasht*, *Ha* 65, and in a certain sense also *Ha* 62, the main contents of which coincide with the *Atash Yasht*.

[21] Compare my article in the *Revue de l'Hostoire des Religions* 1894, I., p. 78 suiv.

language in which the *Gâthas* are written, and which accordingly is termed the Gathic, is more archaic than the other is admitted on all hands. Moreover, the metre of the *Gâthas* is much more ancient and primitive than that of the *Yashts*. If we are not bound, from these reasons alone, to consider not only that the old hymns, as I have already stated, from remote ages have built the basis of the entire *Avesta*, but also to look upon most of these pieces as the product of an anterior date,—this is demonstrated primarily by their tenor as compared with that of the other writings.

The texts in **the Gatha dialect** comprise the *Gâthas*, the *Yasna Haptanghaiti*, four prayers held in profound veneration, and sundry minor bits, such as the profession of faith, etc. We shall discuss them in the sequel. It will then be seen that they likewise are not of equal age, but bear witness to a gradual evolution of religious ideas and concepts. But all in all they are the exponents of an older stage of religious development than that of the literature embodied in a younger form of language. **The Gathas**, properly five collections of songs, which are arranged not in order of their contents or themes, but in accordance with the metre, contain the original Zarathushtrian dogma of redemption, often proclaimed with fervid enthusiasm.[22] We might describe them as that species of hymns, which speaks nothing of the all kinds of institutions and rites that play an important part in the other sections of the *Avesta*, such as the divisions of the year and day, and the Baresman twigs, which are employed at offerings and are used in the ritual. It may be an accident that even the *Yasna* of the Seven Chapters is silent as to them. But a deeper difference obtains, which our history will indicate further on. Here, however, we must notice a few salient points. The Zarathushtra of the *Gâthas*, apart from the question of the prophet's being a historic or legendary personage,

[22] The five *Gâthas* are: (1) *Ahunavaiti*, seven hymns, to which is added the *Yasna Haptanghaiti* or the *Yasna* of the Seven Chapters, a prose work of younger origin; (2) *Ushtavaiti*, four hymns; (3) *Spenat-Mainyu*, four hymns; (4) *Vohu-khshathra*, one hymn, with a prose addendum; and (5) *Vahishtoishti*, one hymn, to which the holy prayer *Airyema Ishyo* is appended.

is a glorified prophet, supreme over all, favoured with the full revelation of Ahura Mazda, and by consequence the head of all earthly beings. The Zarathushtra of the remaining *Avesta* is a mythical creature to whom the homage due to a god is done. The seven Amesha Spentas, that are not once so named in the *Gâthas*, are still far removed from the Spirits of the later lore; they figure hardly even as personifications of abstract ideas. As for the Dualism, it is not less decisively taught in the oldest enunciations than in the rest of the literature. It is a question of two intelligences, a good, and an evil one, who combat each other, and between whom the faithful has to make his choice; but, properly speaking, Mazda stands the most exhalted. The *Gâthas* are cognisant of neither the conception nor the appellation of a hostile creator, the Angramainush of the later system, Mazda's equal in rank, pitted against him and with whom he has to maintain a contest. It may be, however, incidentally remarked that the germ of this future Dualism lies in *Yasna* 45,2,[23] which alludes to the two primeval genii of the world, the holy Spanyao (comparative degree) and the wicked Angro. But the passage viewed in its context, what has gone before and what follows, discloses that by Spanyao is not meant Mazda himself. Lastly, and this is of paramount import, the most amiable of the Yazatas, the most revered, the most puissant antagonist of the realm of the wicked, he who constitutes not less than the sacrosanct fire, the focus of the cult throughout the posterior *Avesta*, Haoma, is nowhere mentioned in the Gathic writings.[24]

[23] "Thus forth I announce to you life's first two spirits,
Of whom the more bounteous the evil accosted:
Never our thoughts, nor creeds, nor understandings,
Never our beliefs, nor words, nor yet our actions,
Nor can our souls or faiths, ever be one."—Mill's *Metrical Version*. [Tr.]

[24] *Yasna* 42, an appendix to the *Yasna Haptanghaiti*, speaks indeed of three Haomas, but it is universally known that this chapter is of a very late date, an after-addition written in bad Gathic. Even if we assume, as will be clear later on in Chapter II., that the Haoma worship was no East-Iranian heritage, this argument retains its full force for at the time the old *Gâtha* texts arose it was yet unknown to the Zarathushtrian, and it occupies a conspicuous place in the other book of the *Avesta*.

This pervading divergence is explicable only on the assumption that the *Gâthas* with their accessories are the oldest records of the creed, and that the texts written in the other dialect mark a degree in their subsequent evolution. It were not impossible in itself that the two tendencies had sprung up synchronously in diverse regions, let us say in East and North-West Iran, and had continued to develop independently, till they were fused one with the other under the Arsacides or the Sassanides. It is likewise possible, at all events, *in abstracto*, that the far purer, more philosophic, idealistic doctrine of the *Gâthas* was the outcome of a reformation of the flagrant dualistic mythological scheme represented in the other books, with all their train of Yazatas and many a factor of the old Aryan faith, so that the latter books would be in reality the older of the two sets. But both the above possibilities are precluded, first by what we stated with reference to the languages, and next by the indisputable circumstance that the last-named later doctrine is built upon that of the *Gâthas*, which it has modified, popularized, and deteriorated. The later religious phase is to be understood in the light of the *Gâthas*, just as the Christian dogma is to be interpreted in the light of the New Testament and not *vice versâ*. The more antique elements, myths, fables, and ritual, which are in point of fact found in the other chapters of the *Yasna*, in several parts of the *Vendidad* and in the *Yasht*, do not predicate a higher antiquity of these writings. They are the resuscitated vestiges of an antecedent epoch, which have been reduced so far as possible to an unison with the Zarathushtrian gospel.

The Gathic texts make up the principal components of the *Staota Yâsnya*, of the *Stot Yasht Nask*, which, as we saw, is the core of the *Yasna*. But they are not the only ones of their kind. We light on the Gathic texts, likewise in the so-called younger *Yasna*, in the chapters, that is, which stand in the commencement and at the close of this *Nask*;[25] in the Mazdayasnian confession of faith, introduced by a concise eulogium and terminating

[25] *Ha* 1-13 and 55-72

in a more exhaustive one;[26] in the lesser *Srosh Yasht* erroneously so dubbed, though it is an invocation addressed to the water and the Fravashis;[27] and finally in a benediction over the cattle and the pious household.[28] The last-mentioned piece in all likelihood originally belonged to the *Hodhakhta Nask*. I would hazard a surmise that the whole *Stot Yasht Nask* or *Staota Yasnya* at first embraced exclusively Gathic texts, and that subsequently a few other similar texts of a different extraction were joined on to them, so as in the ceremonial not to dispense with any of the holiest vouchers of the most ancient revelation, which men still possessed, and that the extant *Yasna* is a latter-day growth issuing from this complex, called forth to meet the requirements of the Hoama ceremony and the rituals of the funeral services, of fire adoration, and the reverencing of the element of water.

In the rest of the *Avesta* books, setting aside sporadic quotations, no *Gâtha* texts are forthcoming. They are indited entirely in the later Baktrian. They all, however, do not date back to the same age; and if in the present state of our knowledge it is beyond our reach to differentiate with precision the anterior from the subsequent portion, still critical inquiry has yielded here and there incontestible results, and has facilitated an analysis of their textual composition.

Thus there is no question but that **the Vendidad,** which now numbers twenty-two chapters, originally closed with the sixteenth. The seventeenth was tagged on later, and hence the repetition of the formula which ends the sixteenth as well as the seventeenth. (The passage in question is not devoid of interest. It runs (S. B. E. IV., p. 189 or 192): All wicked embodiments of the

[26] *Frastuyê*, *Ha* 11, 17-18. *Fravaranê* or *Fraoreitish Ha* 12, 1-8. *Astuyê* or *Astaothwanem*, *Ha* 12, 9-13, 7.

[27] *Ha* 56. The piece begins with the constantly recurring formula: *Sraosho idha astu*, Let there be hearing. In the first word men erroneously discovered the genius sraosha and confused the old text with the much later *Srosh Yasht* which follows in *Ha* 57.

[28] *Ha* 58, 4-7. The verses 1-3 form an introduction, and verse 6 the close of the thus completed *Staota Yesnya*. It is all in almost pure Gathic dialect. Verse 9 is a still later addition in the younger idiom.

Drug are scorners of the Judge: all scorners of the Judge are rebels against the Sovereign ; all rebels against the Sovereign are ungodly men ; and all ungodly men are worthy of death. [Tr.]) All the ensuing chapters are so many supplements made up of texts, which in a measure bear on the main theme. This principal theme is appropriately treated in *Fargards* 5 to 16. For the thirteenth, fourteenth, and the fifteenth, which are taken up with the dog, the favourite domestic animal of the Persians, who almost put it on the same level with humanity, are not out of place here; dogs as well as the beaver and hedge-hog, which were classed with them, being the destroyers of evil genii. Still citations and excerpts from metrical and mythological fragments, to which the prose texts furnish a gloss and the mutual contradiction of many an injunction, and the recurrence of the same prescriptions over and over again in a more or less modified guise, argue that even those *Fargards* are a conglomeration of heterogeneous texts.[29] The seventh chapter bears on the face of it evidence of a later construction than the fifth, from which it rehearses passages word for word, and at the same time attempers the commandments therein inculcated. The seventh is in point of time even preceded by the sixth, which mentions as little as the eighth, the Dakhmas, the towers for the disposal of corpses.[30] It is not settled whether the first four chapters must be held as an introduction by the same hand or as the amplifications of a posterior editor. But this much is positive, that a text of considerable antiquity underlies the first *Fargard*, which is supplemented at places to accord with latter-day ideas. It is a

[29] Comp. the archaic pastoral songs in 3, 24-33, the mythic presentmen of Mazda and the waters in 5 ; 17, 20, 21. Repetitions constantly occur.

[30] *Fargard* 7, 16 has a quotation from the very late *Yasna* 65, 5 ; and 7 52 accords with Farg. 19, 31, and *Yasht* 22, 16—both well known as of a very younger age. The strange reference to the Dakhmas in 7, 49 indicates that they were held at once to be impure and necessary : " O Maker of the material world, thou Holy One ! How long after the corpse of a dead man has been laid down on a Dakhma is the ground whereon the Dakhma stands clean again ?"—S. B. E., IV. 88 [Tr.] What is enjoined in *Farg.* 5 in respect of the purification of a woman delivered of a still-born child is modified by 7, 70-72.

catalogue of the countries which Ahura Mazda created, beautiful and comfortable for his worshippers, but which are marred by the counter-creations of Anghro Mainyush. Perchance already the older portion deviates from its original configuration. At all events a discrepancy obtains between what is related of Airyanam Vaejo, the aboriginal Aryan land, in the beginning and what is said of it in Sections 2 and 3. In the former it is a paradise so charming that, but for the production on the Creator's part of more regions habitable and beautiful, all organized beings would have repaired thither. In the latter it is a real country, which has been unfit to live in, because of its prolonged inclement winter; a country where is located the heart, the very centre of winter, and on which impetuous cold bears down from all quarters. This second delineation is assuredly the earlier one. The lands catalogued make up only a part of Iran, and the editor was alive to it, that this defective list must elicit astonishment in his age. He therefore subjoins the note that there were other regions too, in several respects of superior excellence, which he has not enumerated.

Again, the second *Fargard* is a Zarathushtrian version of the Aryan hero Yima (Yama), the king of primeval humanity, who reigned 900 years, and during which period, owing to the multiplying of his subjects, the earth had twice to be enlarged. But since he apprehended the ruin of everything terrestrial in a severe winter, at the behest of Ahura Mazda, he prepared an enclosed space (*Yara*) to which he migrated with the seeds of cattle, men, dogs, birds, and with blazing fire. We shall revert to this myth further on. But now it is patent to the believing Mazdayasnian how this old tradition, which he was not disposed to surrender, can be brought to harmonize with the orthodox tenet that Zarathushtra had enunciated the law since the inception of creation and that he was himself the chief of the mundane economy. In a somewhat clumsy fashion the author makes Zarathushtra propound the question to Mazda, who replies, that Yima, while willing to extend the good tracts of land, declined to proclaim the law. On Zarathushtra, by consequence, it devolved

to be the first prophet of the true dogma. Another interrogative seeks to ascertain if this dogma was unknown in Yima's *vara*. The reply is to the effect that a mythical bird carried it thither and that *Z*arathushtra was the Ratu or spiritual pontiff, and Urvatat-naro, the Anghu or temporal lord.[31]

To illustrate further that the nineteenth *Fargard* consists of passages of a very promiscuous character, and that they stand in little internal co-relation. Sections 1 to 10 and 43 to 47 cohere, while between them are shoved in three other texts dealing with totally different matter. The main text is the narrative of Zarathushtra's temptation, to all appearance later than most *Fargards* of the Vendidad,[32] but it is superposed on a myth of bygone ages, touched up in the spirit of the Mazdayasnian precepts. The interpolated fragments are referable to a still younger descent.[33]

The Yashts with the *Gâthas* represent the poetical factor of **the Avesta,** and are an ample mine for a knowledge of old Iranian poesy and mythology. However, they are of very unequal merit and date from varying ages. Thus, we have three (one dedicated to an Amesha Spenta, another to Asha Vahishta, the third to Haurvatat), which were not admitted into the *Boghan Nask* and which should not be held to be much more than valueless trivialities. Their hopelessly corrupt text is attributable not to the inadvertence of the transcribers, but to the ignorance of the authors,—we cannot call them poets.[34]

[31] In the posterior lengends Urvatat-naro is the son of Zarathushtra and the chief of the class of husbandmen; originally it was perhaps a cognomen of Yima: "friend of humanity," or, better, one "united to men." From § 39 begins a sort of commentary.

[32] Comp. 19, 5 (the *Prika-khnathaiti*) with *Yasht* 19. For the Sea of Kasu, see *Yasht* 13. The future Saoshyant spoken of there occurs in the later *Yasna*, *Vispered*, and the *Yashts*.

[33] This is proved not only by the invocations 19, 13, but also before all by the genitive Ahuro-Mazdao, which occurs only in *Yasna* 71, 10, where Justi, Darmesteter, and others unjustifiably assume a vocative. Comp. further *Yasna* 7, 24 and 13, 5 in the citations from the *Yasna Haptanghaiti*.

[34] One *Yasht* seems to have been dedicated to Vohumanao also; for the *Bahman Yasht* dating from the 12th Christian century comprises this old Pahlavi translation with the commentary of an Avestic original Comp. West, *Pahlavi Texts* (S. B. E.) I., Intro. pp 4 *seq*. He surmises that the edition, of which the *Bahman Yasht* is an epitome, was prepared in the time of Khusro Nosirvan (531-579 A. D.).

They are manifestly composed to fill up a gap. Laudatory songs in honor of the supreme intelligences of the Zarathushtrian cosmology, addressed collectively or individually, are here promiscuously thrown together. Even the *Ormazd-Yasht*, the Hymn to the High God himself, is out and out prosaic. It is a theological speculation on the divine potency of Ahura Mazda's names, twice interrupted by insipid strings of appellations, of which the second is younger than the first, and which are perhaps both interpolations, not the only ones in this perfunctory piece of uncouth makeshift. But it is just this that bespeaks the relative higher antiquity of others, chiefly those which celebrate the old Aryan divinities metamorphosed into Zarathushtrian Yazatas. They do not appear to have been composed for the individual festivals, but to have later been employed on those occasions. One of the prettiest in point of poetry and religious fervour is the *Homa Yasht;* so also is the *Srosh Yasht;* then the *Ardvisur Banu* or *Aban Yasht* addressed to the celestial waters and their deity, Ardvi Sura Anahita. Next *Tishtar*, *Mihir*, and in part *Farverdin Yasht* are of equal beauty. We shall in the sequel touch on their import; we notice only in passing their structure style and relative age. In respect of the first, their structure, they evince strong marks of interpolations. Amid ardent and vivid descriptions we meet with bald, prosaic comments of a ritualistic purport, which unmistakably betrays the hand of the priest. Besides, at the end, they have monotonous litanies appended. In most cases the epentheses reflect the fact that no pains were taken to reduce them to metrical euphony. Respecting the second point, namely, the age, at the root of most of them lie, without question, popular non-Zarathushtrian ditties. Ever and anon one recognizes, if not the fundamental text which the Mazdayasnian editor has manipulated after his own heart, at least scanty relics of the same. We cannot enter here into details and demonstrate this. But I instance the *Ardvisur Banu* and *Tishtar Yashts* as a couple of telling illustrations.

Various *Yashts* dealing with Yazatas, whose veneration it was intended to commend, before all such Yazatas as were borrowed from the anterior religion and originally did not appertain to the Zarathushtrian system, contain an enumeration of legendary heroes and even of divine existences, who whilom sacrificed to them. Two such lists are illicitly inserted into the *Ardvisur Yasht*. According to Darmesteter, in the first list[35] are mentioned the devotees of Anahita before Zarathushtra; in the second the contemporaries and followers of the Prophet.[36] That is incorrect. For in the first roll are named Jamaspa, Ashavazda, Vistauru and Yoishta, who one and all belong to the entourage of Zarathushtra. The first five strophes are the same as the opening five of the 65th *Yasna*. Several other strophes (7, 11 13, 15) are a colourless copy of the glowing description at the close of the *Yasht*. A few more (88 to 96) are completely ou of keeping with the general tone disclosing theological speculations in an orthodox Mazdayasnian spirit. Setting these aside, and, with the exception of the prelusive and other expatiations, fragments of one or more hymns celebrating *Ardvisur Anahita* remain in which there is nothing pronouncedly Zarathushtrian. A supplication to the goddess to descend from her astral station down on our globe, an enumeration of the blessings which her worshippers, warriors and priests,—(they are here put in the second place)—young maidens and women crave of her, a narrative of her descent in the plenitude of her beauteousness and glory—all this is wound up with a prayer on the part of the warrior to succour him in the battle. (Strophe 132 is an addition by the priest, who makes a sacrificial song of it and to this end repeats over again and enlarges upon the commencement of 85, the request to come down on earth, which is altogether irrelevant since the prayer has long since been granted. Occasionally the editor throws in some features to his own taste, but which ill accord with the general delineation.)

The *Tir Yasht* is occasionally beautiful indeed; beautiful and poetical. But obviously it is a Zarathushtrian Mazdayasnian

[35] *Yasht* 5,16-83. [36] *Yasht* 5,97-118.

recast of a genuine mythological chant. The bliss-diffusing god is portrayed in his diverse transfigurations of a handsome youth, a steer, a white steed with yellow ears. In the last shape is celebrated his combat with the demon of sterility and barrenness, Apaosha, conceived as incarnated in a black stallion. It were an idle effort here or elsewhere, for example in the far-famed *Mihir Yasht*, to seek to reconstruct the primitive non-Zarathushtrian canticle from the text as it stands. The compilers have too far made free with the texts, in order to accommodate them to their theological views, for us to recognise or to recover them in their completeness. But it is easy to make out what has issued solely from the pen of the editors ;—whatever they have prefixed of their own accord, have interpolated or appended on their own initiative.[87]

These researches are in their incipient stage, and the results they have so far yielded have to be more closely tested. We need not accordingly pause longer, as we have yet to answer the inquiry **in what sense the Avesta literature is to be considered a source for the history of Zarathushtrian religion.** Scholars have long delayed setting the problem to themselves and rendering themselves an account of the different characters of the original sources of our information. Consequently they have encountered difficulties that could be surmounted, but which they were not in a position to solve. They found that an antithesis subsisted between the dogma of the *Avesta* and the presentment (in the Achæmenide inscriptions or in Herodotus) of the religion of the Persians and Medes and deduced no end of inconsequent conclusions. There is no denying the existence of the contrast; but it is easily explained by the uniform character

[87] Thus, *e. g.*, in the *Mihir Yasht* (*Yasht* 10), §§ 1-16, is a theological poem which originally did not belong to the *Yasht*, and (as has been already noticed by Darmesteter) 118-139, a purely liturgical portion; 140-144 forming an encomiastic finale. But 115-117 appertain to the next *Yasht*, if it represents no independent fragment. Further, 53-59 and 63 certainly, and 9, 18-21, 23-24, 28-34, 37-43, 48, 83-94, 98-101, 105-111 probably, are Zarathushtrian interpolations. These eliminated, we are left almost exclusively a good coherent mythological panegyric.

of the aforesaid authentic writings. Herodotus relates that which he or his authority had ascertained or experienced of the actual state of religion among the Iranians, and of ananalogous description are the reports of the ancients, particularly Strabo. The inscriptions of the Achæmenides inform us of the Mazdayasnian creed so far as it prevailed as the State religion of the empire ; in other words, as it was officially acknowledged. The *Avesta* presents a picture of the development of Zarathushtrianism, as it was never perhaps instituted prior to Alexander in Media and Persia (at best only in a solitary spot, say the ecclesiastical Ragha), but an outline of it as it lived in the schools of divines and theologians by whom, it is possible, it was introduced into North-West and Eastern Iran.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AGE OF THE AVESTA.

We have examined the sacred Scripture of the Zarathushtrians and are now confronted with the problem to what period does it belong, and how far can we rely on it with success? Do the texts of our *Avesta* and the lost books on which the Sassanian Zend-Avesta was based, along with fragments recently put together, emanate mainly **from the times of the Achaemenides,** possibly from still earlier centuries; or were they composed **after the fall of that dynasty**? Formerly the first was the generally accepted view. And there were scholars who assigned the compilation of the Avestic writings to an epoch preceding the Median Empire. Till very recently eminent authorities concurred in this opinion. But now distinguished savants oppose this theory, championing with more or less vehemence the last-mentioned hypothesis. We are consequently compelled to make a choice between **the two conflicting pronouncements.**

The first to strenuously defend the comparatively later origin of the *Avesta*—a view to which Spiegel, Justi, and de Harlez were more and more inclined with a brilliant array af arguments —- was the late erudite, Frenchman, James Darmesteter, whose death is, with justice, deeply mourned. Darmesteter brought to bear on his researches a profound study of the original sources, rich knowledge rare critical acumen, and at the same time he could command a consummate diction. We cannot enter upon a refutation of all the ingenious but uncurbed conjectures of the author—conjunctures which show that his penetration not unfrequently got the better of his historical sense and his sane judgment.[88] Most of what he has propounded, to give only a

[88] In his latest translation of the *Zend Avesta*, especially in the Introduction to the third Part. In the *Revue de l' Histoire des Religions*, 1894, Vol. XXIX, p. 68 *seq.*, I have discussed and given a statement of the contents of this work: *Une nouvelle hypothese sur l'antiquile de l' Avesta*; and I have spoken on the age of the *Avesta* in the *K. Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam Verslagen en Mededelengen*, 3 Reeks. I must refer the reader to these essays for the details which cannot be gone into in the text.

single instance, relative to the Keresāni of the *Avesta* (who is assuredly neither more nor less than the Kṛshanu of the *Veda*, and therefore an unmistakably mythological personage) as being identical with Alexander the Great, will not, indeed, live longer than the scintillation of a splendid firework. But Darmesteter takes his stand on another and apparently more solid ground; hence our obligation to inquire into its validity.

To begin with, he appeals to tradition. According to at least, two divergent, if in Darmesteter's eyes, essentially concordant traditions, the official text of the complete body of the Zarathushtrian Holy Writ, which was for reasons of State preserved in two separate transcripts, was destroyed with Alexander's co-operation, or at least in consequence of the confusion occasioned by his invasion. Valkash, the Arsacide, who was either Volgoses (51-55 A.D.), the contemporary of Nero, or another king of the same name, and of a posterior age, is reported to have commenced the collecting of the ancient documents, the fragments committed to writing as well as the oral sections, which survived among the sacerdotal order. The first prince of the house of Sasan, Ardeshir (Artaxerxes) I., 226-240 A.D., we are told, continued the pious undertaking with the assistance of Tansar or Tosar. His successor, Shahpuhr I., 241-272 A.D., is credited with causing to be rendered again into the vernacular the Iranian texts, which had been translated into the Greek and Indian languages. Finally, the great hierarch Atarpad, son of Maharespand, under Shahpuhr II. (309-379), definitively concluded the last redaction of the Sassanide *Z*end-Avesta.

These traditional accounts may not be incorrect in general and one is warranted thus to concatenate the two versions; yet they must not be looked upon as more than a reminiscence of the manner and way in which the Avesta Scripture was once more brought together, after both the authentic copies of it had perished, either in the conflagration of Persepolis or otherwise. And at the same time, however, still to pursue the tradition, the texts were translated from the obsolete Baktrian into the Pahlavi

the court language of the Sassanides, and were furnished with commentaries more in a theological than in an exegetical vein.

But, according to Darmesteter, we have here to deal not merely with a compilation, nor even a redaction and the working up of extant texts, but with the actual composition of new writings. Not one of the ancient Zarathushtrian texts had survived, and the entire Avesta sprang up posteriorly to Alexander the Great, says Darmesteter. In view, however, of the testimony of the archaic Persian inscriptions and the narratives of the Greeks, he can scarcely dispute that the basis of dogma promulgated in the *Avesta* is primitive—a point to which we shall presently return.

But the books themselves are a latter day production; and the old doctrines have been independently worked up into them to harmonize with the spirit of the age, or rather, and this is one of his chief contentions, under the influence of alien creeds and foreign philosophical systems. He detects in the *Avesta* undoubted traces of the Indian (*i.e.*, Brahmanic and Buddhistic) Hellenic, chiefly Hellenistic, and Jewish concepts and figures. Let us examine how far the assertion is true.

No one denies the unison between the Indian and the Iranian religions. A number of myths, legends, rituals, concepts, and names of existences to whom prayers are offered they have in common.

The supreme deities of the Iranian, the Ahuras, are the formidable antagonists of the Indian's divinities, and, conversely, the Devas have become the abominated evil genii of the Iranian. But Mithra, Aryaman, Vayu, and diverse other gods claim equal adoration from both. Yama or Yima is among both nations the sovereign of the primordial human beings and of the kingdom of the dead. The service of Soma—Haoma—occupies the premier place in the cult at once of the Indian and the Iranian, particularly in later times. Darmesteter must concede that all these phenomena can be most simply accounted for as the relics of an anterior period, when the two peoples still constituted one nation. There is certainly no borrowing either on

the part of the Indian or the Iranian. Even the circumstance that the Indian paramount god Indra, Sarva, who probably stands for Siva, and Nâsatsyas are mentioned as idols in the Avesta does not tell against the antiquity of the latter, inasmuch as the Indians were not only the next-door neighbours of the ancient Persians, but Hapta Hindu, or the river-valley of the Indus, is accounted as Iranian territory in the *Vendidad*, and is reckoned among the provinces of the monarchy in the inscriptions of the Persian sovereigns of bygone ages.

As regards what is alleged to have been borrowed from Buddhism, it is confined to this. A certain demon Buiti is sought to be identified with the Buddha, another called Butasp with the Bodhisattva, and Gaotema again with the Buddha under his appellative of Gautama. [39] That is all, and, strictly speaking, that is nought. If Buiti must needs have an Indian parallel, it can only be Bhuta, a goblin or sprite. Butasp does not occur in the Avesta, but only in a passage in the *Bundahesh* (XXVIII., 35), which is *forcefully* so read after great straining. And as for Gaotema, it can by no possibility correspond to the Indian patronymic of Gautama. It answers to Gotama, the name of the Vedic bard, who probably already belonged to the Aryan mythology.

The consonance between Israelite and Iranian legends and ideas is of equal import; that is, in respect of the Aveta the similarities are of no moment. We meet with something of more substantial significance in the *Bundahesh*; in other words in a volume dating from the later Sassanides. And even if the resemblances belonged to the most ancient component part of the *Bundahesh* which part has a great deal in common with the *Damdat Nask*, they can be satisfactorily explained on much more convincing grounds.

It remains, then, to consider the principal indictment, to wit, that the whole system of the Gathic precepts, the fundamental tenets of the Zarathushtrian faith, is a feeble echo of Hellenistic philosophy, and mainly that of Philo Judæus. The Amesha Spentas do not belong to the ancient Mazdayasnian

[39] With reference to Gautama, Martin Haug fell into the same error.

religion, but are philosophic, neo-Platonic ideas; in fact, Irainianized æons. And this simply because Vohu-mano, the Amesha Spenta most intimately connected with Ahura Mazda, displays a few points of contact with the Logos of Philo. I have on another occasion analyzed the utter impossibility of this hypothesis and have shown that probably out of two of the Amesha Spentas, positively one appears as a god on the coins of the Indo-Scythian Kings Kanishka and Huvishka, though behind names that have been corrupted almost out of recognition;[40] and that going so far back as Plutarch we find him correctly acquainted with the denominations and the import of the Amesha Spentas. Now Philo died about A. D. 25 which well nigh coincides with the date of Plutarch's birth. And the first-mentioned king ascended the throne in the year A. D. 78. Within, therefore, half a *seculum* the works of the Alexandrian philosophers must have been studied by the Persian theologians; the system which they created must have been worked out and written down and made known to the Greeks. Moreover, the philosophic personifications, which they imitated from Philo, must have been so thoroughly transformed into popular deities that their names became totally deteriorated and it became possible for foreign potentates to assume them. This is simply inconceivable, and hence the hypothesis itself is nothing but an ingenious delusion.

Darmesteter is prepared to allow antiquity to a few of the precepts incorporated in the Avesta; and of a truth he cannot but make the concession. Even Aristotle knew of Oromazdes and Arimanios and the extravagance of the dualism as referring to the Supreme Being. Theopompus speaks of the Zoroastrian doctrine of palingenesis. Consequently both must have heard of these Avestan articles of faith prior to Alexander. The worship of Haoma cannot but have been in vogue for a long time previously, despite the omission of its mention in Herodotus or other Greek authors. It attests the Soma service of the tribally allied Indians. Finally, the *tout ensemble* of

[40] Comp. the essays referred to *ante*.

the practical and utilitarian moral code of the Parsis, perhaps the dogma, too, of universal genesis out of Boundless Time was not thought of so late as after the downfall of the Persian Empire. But the doctrine of the Amesha Spentas and the Yazatas was unknown anterior to this epoch, and Ahura Mazda was a nature-god at the head of the entire pantheon of nature divinities.[41] Hence this, and much besides which is peculiar to the Avesta, it is contended, dates from the Arsacides and the Sassanides. Now, to say nothing of other objections, it is not competent to us thus off-hand to brand some tenets as primitive because they happen to be mentioned here and there, and to hold as of latter-day growth what is dissociably joined with the creed and what constitutes the proper soil in which this article of belief has taken root, *viz.*, the doctrine of Ahura Mazda being the sole real and beneficent deity, the creator exalted above his creatures and with his saints around and under him, because, forsooth, Plutarch is the first to advert to it. At any rate, we cannot raise the undoubtedly younger doctrine of Boundless Time, the origin of all creation, to the level of the well-founded tenet which regards Mazda as the uncreated God. The remote antiquity of the Amesha Spentas is directly proved by the manner in which Plutarch rehearses the doctrine. He knows and mentions the idea which subsequently grew so prominent, that over against the seven highest good spirits are arrayed seven evil genii, so that each of them has his antagonist in the realm of darkness—a conception which was yet alien to the Avesta proper.

The most important positive proof for the anitquity of the Avesta lies in the language in which it is written. That the language was no longer current in the beginning of the Christian era any more than the Old Baktrian, no one denies. And yet we are asked to believe that in and after the first century A. D. the *mobeds* composed the 21 Nasks of the Avesta

[41] Darmesteter concludes this from the words *hada bagaibis vithibis* occurring in the ancient Persian inscriptions, which words he altogether wrongly interprets. Comp. *Verslagen in Mededeelingen der K. A. te Amsterdam.*

in two dialects of this language, one older than the other, albeit they no more understood it and were obliged at the same time to immediately render them into the then vernacular of the empire, which was Pahlavi. To indite in a dead language is not only possible, but is very common centuries after it has ceased to be a spoken idiom. But this is feasible only provided we possess a literature which to look upon as our model, and not when the literature has perished, save for scanty minor fragments. The Pahlavi version of the Avesta books is adduced as a proof that the antique tongue was very well understood, at least in the initial period of the Sassanian domination. But it is one thing to hammer out the sense of writings in an archaic idiom, specially when the knowledge reposes more on scholastic tradition than on the language as such, and entirely another to write books in it—books poetic and of a philosophical tenor. Furthermore, had the texts been forthwith translated into the vulgar tongue, they would not have left so much to desire. The most zealous advocates of tradition (although one at times marvels at the sheer rigmarole they are capable of digesting) are now and again forced to deviate from it and strike out a path for themselves. It is not possible that the gathas should have originated synchronously with Alexander. Their text is frequently past all interpretation and much mutilated, which argues general ignorance on the part of those who inherited them from generation to generation. The offences against grammar and idiom on which we repeatedly light are not the regular and recurring faults of unschooled authors. They are so many illustrations of the supineness of illiterate guardians. The metre, exceedingly primitive in many respects, harmonious with the Vedic, and being archaic, is often confused. We need, however, but restore the correct forms, and it is again all in order. What should this prove but that it was posterity and not the poets who were not at home in the prosody. It is perfectly within the range of possibility that under the Parthian monarchy, and even in the second Persian empire, people could draw up in Old Baktrian a few glosses, brief litanies, benedictions, for-

mulæ of adjuration, calendars, &c.; nay, they could turn out verses, half plagiarized from the primitive text, half imitated and forming a farrago of unpoetic poems. But no one was able to compose a Gatha, the Vendidad, one of the longer *Yashts*, which we discussed in the foregoing section, in an age which heralded the period of the dry and selly scholasticism of the Pahlavi commentators.

The ancient Persian is most intimately allied to the Old Baktrian. Now we know that the former had so far grown obsolete already under the later Achæmenides that their inscriptions are veritable examples of cacography. It is not quite possible that the Baktrian at that date was still in its bloom. We can, at all events, conceive of two-sister speeches, one of them with a more protracted lease of existence, and better-preserving obsolete word formations. But this can only be when the natives employing this dialect have little or no intercommunion, and when each of the two clans stand on a different plane of civilization. It is never the case when they profess the self-same faith, cherish one sacred lore, and, what is more, owe allegiance to a common political constitution. That being so, it was inevitable that the East and the West Iranian, the language of the *Avesta* and the language of the Achæmenides, should proceed at an uniform pace in their development and their decay.

We cannot here enter into too much detail. Else we should bring forward evidence to show that between the forms of the proper names as we find them in the Avesta and the Pahlavi version and on the coins of the Indo-Scythian rulers centuries must elapse. But we will not pass over in silence one personal name, for therefrom can be deduced one of the most striking proofs for the antiquity of the Avesta, *viz.*, the name of the Supreme Godhead. Let us consider the vicissitudes which it has endured. The oldest form is, doubtless **Mazda Ahura** or **Ahura Mazda**, looked upon and treated as two names, occasionally in the plural, placed in juxtaposition. In the *Gâthas* the first-named sequence is the most usual, but the other

too, often occurs ; mostly both names are severed from each other by one or more words or at least by a cæsura, and they are always separately declined. So also in the remaining Gathic scripts. In the later books the position Mazda Ahura appears only in citations from the Gathic literature and in standing formulæ like the fire of Mazda Ahura, and Manthra Spenta, the friend of Mazda Ahura. Moreover, here we but rarely find Ahura or Mazda singly as names of the Divinity, which isolated names are frequently presented by the poets of the Gathas. With the exceptions indicated above, Ahura Mazda is the most common appellation in the posterior Avesta; yet the consciousness that it consists of two distinct words is not yet extinct. Leaving out of account a couple[42] of very young passages both the members are individually declined. In the inscriptions of the Achæmenides, however, Ahura Mazda has become *one* name, nor are the two substantives divided off by the sign which in the Old Persian denotes the terminations of words. Excepting once only,[43] the second component alone is declined. Lastly, the Greeks recognize the name not otherwise than as a unity, Oromazes, and as such it remains among the Iranians of post-Alexandrian times, who abbreviate it into Auharmazd, Hormazd or Ormazed.

We shall not have to go far to arrive at the result of this investigation, if we reflect upon the exalted veneration in which the name of a god, and that the highest, was held in the past. The periods in which the combined names could be put down at pleasure, that is, could be disjoined or associated, or each member could singly be used, in which stages consequently there was still a vivid consciousness of their significance, must precede that stage in which they are arrayed in one fixed order,

[42] These are *Yasna* 7, 24 and 13, 5: Ahura-Mazdâ. The last passage may contain a purely clerical oversight, for here we have a quotation from the *Yasna Haptanghaiti*. The genitive Ahuro Mazdao, *Vendidad* 19, 15, and *Yasna* 71, 10 (where Justi and Darmesteter wrongly conjecture a vocative), is of another kind : simply a grammatical mistake.

[43] In C (a and b) 10 and 17 (Xerxes) we find the double genitive *aurahya mazdaha*.

although they are uniformly considered as individual vocables and dealt with as such. And this transitional stage, again, must be older than the one during which the two-fold name has crystallized into one compound word, the first component of which is never or only exceptionally declined. The whole Avesta, therefore, represents a more archaic period of religious evolution than that evidenced by the rock-cut writings of the Achæmenides. Not, however, that every text of the later Avesta was drawn up in the pre-Persian times, for in the priestly schools the old tradition must have survived longer; but we contend that in respect of its main position it is assignable to an age when the Ahura Mazda had not developed, nor stratified, into **the Aura Mazda of the later Persians.** Briefly, the history of the Iranian equivalent of God corroborates what other facts teach us about the age of the Avesta and the form of the religion as exhibited in the latter.[**]

I shall cursorily touch on the other arguments, which have been brought forward for or against this antiquity; but I cannot altogether pass them over unnoticed. Darmesteter opines that the political conditions reflected in the Avesta harmonize but with those of the Parthian monarchy. The Parthian sway was feudal. The large landholders ruled independently and were bound to follow the king only in war. Now, to Darmesteter the Avesta is cognisant of no higher political civic grade than that of the judiciary of a canton. Hence it cannot have been written during the Median or Persian monarchy. But, in the first place the political institution under the Persian domination, prior to the introduction of a rigidly absolute monarchy by Darius Hystaspes, was the same as the Parthian, and it can scarcely be distinguished from the Median constitution: And, besides, it is not correct that the Avesta never speaks of a king or suzerainty. We need only call to mind the struggles for the possession of the regal glory or majesty of the Aryan lands, which so repeatedly turn up.

[**] Comp. the exhaustive demonstration in my oft-cited treatise "*Over de Oudheid van't Avesta.*"

Of far greater moment are the pleas for the remote antiquity of the Avesta which are derived from reference in it to **the political and economic relations of the countries.** None of the tribes which have played an important part in history subsequent to the 9th century B.C., the Medians, Persians or Parthians, are once mentioned. The Avesta is aware of only the Aryans, such as, according to Herodotus, the Medians named themselves. Nowhere are the distinguished capitals spoken of, the Median Ekbatana or the residences of the Achæmenides, Susa, Persepolis or Pasargadæ, which latter was the city of the Magians, and a city of priesthood.[45] The solitary considerable cities which are alluded to, assuming that we accept the traditional interpretation of the passages, are Nineve, which was devastated in the 7th century, and Babylon.[46] But in case Babylon is actually mentioned here, which is suspicious, and in the capacity of a seat of tyrants who dreamed of a world-sovereignty but failed in their object, then that must be the memory or the legend of aboriginal times—times before the founding of his metropolis by Cyrus and anterior even to Median kings, the friendly contemporaries of the Babylonians. In their days the time-honoured metropolis cannot figure as the abode of an odious usurper in the imagination of the Iranians. Under no circumstances it is open to us to take refuge in the assertion that the Median and Persian premier cities had already forfeited their importance when the Avesta was revealed. For then the question arises, how it was that the seats of later dynasts, the Seleucides, the Arsacides, and the Sassanides, are so totally ignored? That Firdausi in his epics gives them the go-by is natural, in that he loves to adhere to tradition and makes a bare mention of a few Achæmenides.

[45] Plutarch, C. 3. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* 6, 26.

[46] Nineve: *Yasht* 10, 104 and *Yasna* 5, 29 (which passage, however, the tradition translates differently). Darmesteter is totally incorrect when he thinks of a river.

Babylon: *Yasht* 5, 29: Azhi Dahaka the mythical snake that subsequently passed for a personification or symbol of foreign domination, sacrifices for the attainment of the sovereignty of seven quarters of the work, which Anahita had not conceded to him, *bawroish paiti danhoyé*, in the land of Babylon. The elucidation, however, is far from definite.

The economical circumstances of the people among whom the Avesta had its home are in the last degree antique. All that has been stated in respect thereof is not conclusive. It is neither proved nor probable that they were unacquainted with the use of iron, gold, and salt. But what is proved beyond question, and will be shown in the sequel, amounts to this. The *Gâthas* are the original documents not merely of a religious but likewise an economic reform—a reform from the nomadic stage of life to settled husbandry. The gospel of such a reformation was not called for in the age of the Arsacides, nor under the foregoing monarchs of Iran. Religion and tillage have long since triumphed and permanently retain their close association. The whole body of the Avesta is a veritable sacrosanct writing calculated to establish a class of cultivators, composed of cattle tenders and peasants, with simple unsophisticated notions and usages; while the divisions of time, as in the religious prescriptions of the *Vendidad* and of the later *Yasna*, throughout answer to their primitive requirements. It is not till we come down to the *Yashts* that a different spirit reveals itself. It is the talk about royal majesty, about battles, and conquests; wherefor they must have, to hazard a surmise, originated in the times of kings.[47]

On all these grounds we predicate **a high antiquity of the Avesta.** Should it be in reality composed after the commencement of our era, it would be one of the most mysterious and dexterous literary forgeries which have ever been perpetrated. One of the most dexterous, because, the transgressors pitched upon a language, which was no more spoken and was no longer understood of the people collectively, and of which all original documents had perished. They wrote down in a more antique dialect the fragments they wished to be considered oldest. They set forth the religion of their creation with such consummate art

[47] Comp. before all W. Geiger, *Asteranische, Kultur im Altertum*, Erlangen, 1882 [English tr. by Dastur Darab Sanjana], and *Vaterland und Zeitalter due Avesta und Seiner Kultur*, in *Sitz. Berder Kgl. Bairesh Akad.* 1884, p. 340 *seq.*) Geiger often proves too much, but what Spiegel (*Uber Vaterland und Zeitalter des Avesta*, *Z. D. M. G.* 1887, p. 280 *seq.*) adduces against it is quite as feeble as his previous essay on the subject—*vide* R. Roth, *Z. D. M. G.* 1880, p. 698.

that they infused vividness and freshness into the hymns which were to be looked upon as archaic, and austereness into what was to be reputed of a subsequent growth ; and finally they adulterated their religon with foreign elements. In a word, not only they fabricated religious texts, but also a whole course of religious unravelment, and were solicitous that the history of the language they employed kept pace with it. With studied assiduity they avoided what could be referred to their own generation, named no names beyond those of mythic antiquity, and in all this did not betray themselves once. One of the most mysterious, because this product of imposture became within a few years universally accepted. The fictitious figures of a counterfeit theosophy were transmuted forthwith into popular deities, and were immediately thereafter acknowledged by native and foreign princes. Nay, more, in those very schools whence these compositions emanated it was possible for men simultaneously to produce a very defective rendering with elucidations which not unfrequently succeeded in completely obscuring the sense of the original. Methinks such a forgery is impossible. Rather am I persuaded that the writings whose contents investigated with critical exactitude so clearly help a comprehension of the process of evolution of the Zoroastrian religon are genuine and ancient documents. The sketch of this development, which we are about to draw, will prove the most conclusive arguments in its support.

To contract the period of the origin of this scripture within narrower limits we lack historical data. Some scholars hold that the older part of it belongs to the 13th pre-Christian century, and incline to a still dimmer past. Others conjecture that the date of the Avesta literature is to be set down between 1000 and 600 B. C.[48] I am convinced that we must place **the earliest pieces of the later Avesta** (if not in the form of its present redaction) not much later than **800 B. C.** The Gathic writings are, as a matter of course, a couple of centuries older, albeit later than the rise and the first promulgation of the faith. But on this point we may but make conjectures.

[48] Bartholomae, *Handbuch der Alteranischen Dialekte*, p. 1 *seq.*

CHAPTER V.[49]

Earliest History of the Zoroastrian Religion—Introduction —Geography, Ethnography, and General History of Iran.

With the Medo-Persians and their near kinsmen the Baktrian or East Iranians, who for close on three centuries followed the Babylonians and Assyrians in the suzerainty of Western Asia, and who, albeit for a brief space and with little success, overran Egypt and Greece, there enters on the stage of universal history **an Aryo-European or Indo-Germanic nation** to play on it a not inconsiderable part. The territory it occupied in its prosperous times stretched from the Caspian Sea to the Araxes, and the Oxus, the sea of Aral in the North, and the Hindu Kush, the table-land of the Pamirs, and the Indus and its tributaries in the East, as far as the Erythrian or Persian Gulf in the South, and Elam, Babel, and Assyria in the West. It is usually denominated **Iran**, *i. e.*, the land of **the Iranians or Aryans**, and the most important parts of which it is made up are Persia, Greater Media or Media Proper, Lesser Media or Atropatane, Parthia, and Baktria, together with the Eastern provinces. Elam or Susiana is, too, frequently included therein. It is, as contrasted with the fertile colony watered by prodigious torrents in which the Semites settled, a mountainous country traversed by scanty rivers, with an **extremely unstable climate**,—here and there, and particularly in the valleys, a considerably fertile but mostly ungrateful soil, which exacted enormous exertion from its children. For the greater part it is arid, an extensive waste separating the west from the east. But the eastern regions are distinguished by fruitfulness and a temperate clime ; while many of them may be esteemed as true paradises. We shall observe

49 [In this Chapter, when a pair of names is joined by a hyphen, the first indicates the Avesta and the second the corresponding Indian term., *e. g.*, in Haoma-Soma, Haoma is the *Avesta* expression and Soma the answering Vedic equivalent.—TR.]

that this nature of the lands of Iran is co-related not only with the manner of its inhabitants, but has also **influenced the character of their religion.** Herodotus[60] extols the sagacity of Cyrus, who, to the suggestion of Artembares and certain others of the nobility for an exchange of their poor and parched habetat for a more productive and affluent country when it was in their power to do so, said in reply that they would then degenerate from the rulers into the ruled. Thus the Greeks perceived, and may be the Persians too, that the nature of the soil and the climate of the country had made a shrewd, hardy, warlike race of them, a race which for a time dominated the civilized world. These natural characteristics are reflected in the prosaic, practical, and severely austere moral trend of the Zarathushtrian religion.

ETHNOGRAPHY.

The people, after whom the land is called Iran in contradistinction to the Turanian countries, and who rose to be the ruling nation, had not been always dwelling there. They gradually supplanted more primitve tribes, whom they to all appearance did not hunt down, but in a great measure absorbed in themselves. They designated themselves **Aryans**, just as the Indians discriminated their own people by the same appellation from

[60] Herodotus, 9, 122. [Artembares, the grandfather of this Artayctes who was hoisted aloft, was the person who originated a remark which the Persians adopted and conveyed to Cyrus, in these terms; "Since Jupiter has given the sovereign power to the Persians, and among men, to you, O Cyrus, by overthrowing Astyages; as we possess a small territory, and that rugged, come, let us remove from this and take possession of another, better. There are many near our confines, and many at a distance. By possessing one of these we shall be more admired by most men; and it is right that those who bear rule should do so; and when shall we have a better opportunity than when we have the command of many nations and of all "Asia"? Cyrus, having heard these words, and not admiring the proposal, bade them do so; but when he bade them, he warned them to prepare henceforth not to rule, but to be ruled over; for that delicate men spring from delicate countries, for that it is not given to the same land to produce excellent fruits and men valiant in war. So that the Persians, perceiving their error, withdrew and yielded to the opinion of Cyrus; and they chose rather to live in a barren country, and to command, than to cultivate fertile plains and be the slaves of others.— TR.]

the rest of the masters of the Indian peninsula. In the Avesta occasionally we come across Aryans and Aryan territories. The Achæmenides prided themselves on their being not Persians merely, sons of Persians, but also Aryans, sons of Aryans, and, as already remarked, the Medes, according to Herodotus, were previously called *Arioi*. It does not follow from this that the Medes were the only ones to bear the name, because the historian was unaware that other septs, too, laid claim to it. Even the sparse Ossites[51] of the Caucasus, who speak an Iranian tongue, assume the denomination of *Iron*. Aryan signifies noble—those born of pure blood, the *ingenui*. Whatever the diversity of the idioms they employ, in actuality and at least originally they composed but one language. Its dialects fall probably into two large groups, of which one had spread from Afghanistan in the South over the whole East Iran and the North. To it, *inter alia*, belonged the idiom of the Avesta or the Baktrian, while the other swayed the West, that is, to speak with greater precision, Media and Persia. Sufficient data are by no means forthcoming to regard the Avestaic speeeh as that of Media. To judge by the names of the Medes familiar to us, this dialect need not have radically differed from the Persian. This conjecture is confirmed by the fact that the huge inscriptions which Darius Hystaspes had incised on the rock of Behistun. like those in Persia Proper, have been composed in old Persian, new Susian, and Assyrian or Babylonian tongues. Had the current language of Media been totally other than the Persian, he would have substituted the latter by the former. For the assumption that the second of the languages in question was Median is grounded on misapprehension. It is assuredly the language of Susiana, most intimately akin to the Elamite, in which likewise inscriptions are preserved in two dialects, one more archaic than the other. Now it is quite possible that the aborigines of Media, subjugated by the Aryans, employed a language of the same family with the Elamite; but in the time of the Achæmenides and the Aryan supremacy it was

[51] [Dr. Hübschmann contributes a dissertation on their language to the *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie*.—Tr.]

unquestionably not the recognized speech of the country. The domination of Media was Aryan. The names of the vast majority of kings of whom Herodotus makes mention, and some of which recur in the old Persian cuneiform inscriptions, go to prove this. Oppert's attempts to explain the names presented by Ktesias (in lieu of those of Herodotus) by means of the Susian, *i. e.*, the so-called Median, must, despite all the ingenuity expended over them, be reckoned abortive.

In reference to religion **all Iranians** constituted a real unity—we leave out of account presumably local peculiarities,—although there is little about them which we know with absolute certitude. And in antiquity, unity of faith usually goes hand in hand with uniformity of language. They all **adopted**, if not without modifications, **the Mazdayasna creed**. Auramazda is to Darius and his successors, as in the Avesta, the Supreme Deity, the Creator of all, notwithstanding their perpetual veneration along with Him of local divinities in pursuance of local tradition. And howsoever Cyrus and Kambyses, as conquerors of alien dominions, may have shaped their Church policy, there are no grounds to warrant the supposition that they were not adorers of Mazda. The Magians, a Median sept according to Herodotus, were for both the nationalities the sole and legitimate leaders of the cultus and the guardians of religious usage. Without them no sacrificial rite could be validly performed. This clearly indicates that in this respect the Medians were not distinguished from the Persians. In this regard they were differentiated from the other Iranians—at least from those among whom the Avesta originated. Among the latter the sacerdotal class are styled *Athaŕvans*, or fire-priests, a designation which Strabo still met with in Capadocia. The name of the Magi in the sense of priests does not occur in the *Avesta*.[52] The prevalence, however, even in Media of the

[52] The only passage, *Yasna* 65, 7 (Spiegel, 64, 25), where it is supposed to be found must be interpreted differently. See the Monograph *Over de Oudheid vant Avesta*, blz. 8.

[Mill's version of the passage is admittedly based on the Pahlavi gloss. —TR.]

Zarathushtrian religion is inferable from the names of two of the most considerable kings, Fravartis and Uvakhshatara (Phraotes and Kyaxeres), names which both connote unmixed Mazdo Zarathushtrian ideas, to wit, "the professor" and "the promoter of growth." And they undeniably held sway in the East and North of Iran, where lay at all events most of the lands which the first *Fargard* of the *Vendidad* enumerates as created by Ahura Mazda for his worshippers and provided with all blessings. Moreover, the legendary accounts transfer to Atropatene the birthplace of Zarathushtra. It is admitted on all hands that the service of Mazda was extended as far as Armenia.

We have naturally no records of the religion of the Iranians anterior to the genesis and introduction of Zarathushtrianism. But that it was the same in all the tribes may be considered certain. The Iranians constituted one of the two septs of the Aryans, of which the Indians were the other. And we purpose to show that both originally were adherents of a common worship; wherefrom it directly follows that the ancient religion of the Iranian tribes, apart from local divergences, was one and the same, being a ramification of the more primitive Aryan faith.

When and whence the **Aryans immigrated into Iran,** and how they diffused themselves over the country, is a problem admitting of **no conclusive solution.** At first it was held that the opening chapter of the *Vendidad* furnished a clue to it. In this catalogue of countries,[88] beginning with the lands of the Aryan fraternity and ending with the valleys of the Indus and the Rangha or Xexartes, some read a narrative of the exodus of the primordial Aryan settlers in Iran. Others combat this view on diverse grounds, and, *inter alia*, because of the inclusion in the list of mythical territories. But the latter objection

[88] [Of the sixteen lands, nine are identified with certainty. For the rest the Pahlavi commentary is our only guide.—*S. B. E.* IV. 1. *seq.* Dr. W. Geiger's *Geographie von Iran* in the *Grund, Iran, Phil,* is a storehouse of condensed information and completely quotes the literature. As regards modern Persia, even in point of geography, Lord Curzon's work stands pre-eminent,—TR.]

is yet far from substantiated. **Aryanem Vaejo**, the Aryan *stem-land*, is decidedly not a fanciful region, notwithstanding that latterly, and also to the glossators of the *Fargard*, it became a legendary land, the rendezvous of Ahura Mazda, Yima, and Zarathushtra—in other words, a paradise. It is a very real country where the weather is unendurable, and which on that account appears to have been abandoned of men. Subsequently the phantasy of latter-day generations came to glorify it. Varena, too, though we are unable to verify its site, is as much or as little imaginary as the ancient countries figuring in the military annals of Egyptian and Assyrian princes, the situation of which is obscure to us. Nor is it to be relegated to the domain of the unreal because it was the theatre of the legends of Thraetona and Azi Dahaka. For in that case Babel, too, were a mythical city, where another passage locates Azi Dahaka's abode. And how many myths of antiquity do not allude to actual and extant places? The explanation above referred to seems to me not so untenable. The apparent anomaly with which the author now and again springs from one end of the land to another confirms me in this hypothesis. Did we but reflect on the regions whose situation is established, we should get a clear notion of the gradual expansion of the nation. Issuing from Airyanem Vaejo, where colonization was first sought,[54] the Aryans settle in the desolate Sughdha, or Sogdiana, and progress onward to the neighbouring Margiana and Nisaea,[55] from the last named to Haraina, the Areia of the Greeks and modern Herat, thence to Vakereta, which is probably Kabul, and to Harakhraiti, the modern Helmend. Between whiles settlements were attempted in the Northern Hyrkania and the adventurers had wandered forth up to Ragha.

Next follow, to omit the unidentified Varena and Chakhra (conjecturally both lay somewhere in the vicinity of the

[54] Note that here we have obviously to deal with a Colony; the Aryan land is called not Sughdha, but Gava which is in Sughdha. The chapter contains more similar expressions.

[55] Nisaea is said to lie between Bakhdhi and Mouru. Literally this is not correct. May it not indicate that it was colonized by emigrants from both?

Caspian Sea), the Haptâ Hindu in the South-east, and Ragha, which latter, a land of inclement cold, must have occupied more northern latitudes. Be that as it may, the document the editor of the *Fargard* employed to his instructive end bears every trace of hoary antiquity. It exhibits the geographical horizon of the original author in its entirety. His Iranian world does not extend beyond. Media and Persia were situate outside of these limits.

HISTORY.

The above exposition derives corroboration from the records of the wars of the Assyrian kings. Several times they made incursions, and prior to the Babylonian conquerors, far into **Media**. Though they did not completely overthrow it, they pursued the object of terrorizing the populace by ceaseless raids and predatory inroads, and there founded sporadic colonies. Now well nigh all the names of the Median localities and tribes they mention have a non-Aryan ring about them, at any rate till the reign of Saragon II. This evidences that the bulk of the Aryans before the eighth century B. C., had not pressed forward so far to the west. Still we encounter stray exceptions. In near propinquity to the eastern border of Assyria the country or the clan of Paršuaš is spoken of, which appear to have dwelt east of Elam at the time of Senacherib. Perhaps they were the Persians, though the name might equally be an Assyrian disguise for the Parthavas or Parthians. In the annals of Salamanassar II., ninth century B. C., he relates of a victory over a certain Artasar who lived not far from Paršuaš, and speaks of a prince of Hubushka, now called Data, and again Datana.[56] Both names are certainly Aryan. Tiglatpiesar III., names as the lord of Kummukh, *i. e.*, Kommagene, far in the west, a Kushtaspi, in which uncouth expression we recognize the unmistakable Vishtaspa. Saragon II. captures in Man a Dayaukku, which word he considers a proper name, but which signifies a landgrave *dahyuka*. A similar oversight we discover in Herodotus who calls the

[56] Black obelisk, line 171 *seq.*, 161 and 177. By "Aryan" is meant here by no means "Perso-Aryan." There were also Aryan or Indo-German Scythians whose language was evidently akin partly to the Iranian. The name of the country of Khubushka sounds quite Scythian.

founder of the Median Monarchy Deiokes.[57] Finally, Ashurahiddan advanced up to Patischaria, Patusharra, the old Persian Patishuvari, and there waged war on two rulers whom he denominates Eparna and Siterparna, names in which occur the Zarathushtrian idea of *frana*, the Baktrian *hvarena*, the sacred *gloria*. Consequently, the Aryans, though settled in the east and north, appear to have but tardily progressed to the west and south portions of Iran, till at last they grew in puissance enough to establish an empire.

According to an ancient tradition available to the Greeks, **Baktria** was, previous to the founding of the Median hegemony, a powerful principality with a tolerably advanced civilization. It is hard to account as history a tradition which sounds highly improbable and which has but a slender basis. However, it is perhaps not altogether groundless and is capable of being sustained by the circumstance that the Aryan at first betook himself to Baktria and the adjoining districts before Media and Persia owned him overlord. Since the explorations of the past few years the remote antiquity of culture has been more and more established, and there is little warrant to urge the impossibility of such domination here and at such an obscure period of the past. An undisputed precedence over other eastern principalities is accorded to Baktria in the Iranian and Indian sources. Better data witness to the existence of the Median dynasty, though we are not left much detail. As noted above, Deiokes, to whom Herodotus ascribes the founding of the empire, is in all probability but the title of the landgrave. The other names which he specifies, Phraotes and Kyaxares, are good Persian ones, and are familiar to us through the inscriptions of the Achæmenides. A revolutionary under Darius claims descent from Uvakhshastar (Kyaxares). Another, a Mede, is called Fravertes, and names himself Khshathrita, while obviously he is designated Kashtaritu prince of Media in an Assyrian fragment.[58]

[57] Comp. my *Babylonisch-Aisyrische Geschichte*, p. 263.

[58] In another Assyrian text he is called town-bailiff of Karkassi, and with him is mentioned Mamitiarsu, the town-bailiff of the Medes. Comp. my *Babylon.-Assyr. Geschichte*, p. 334, *seq.*, and especially p. 335, note 1.

Presumably, Khshathrita, was the last legitimate ruler of Media, and Astyages, whom Nabunaid, the last autocrat of Babel, dubs Ishtuvegu, a Scythian or Kimmerian usurper.

It is definitely known that Astyages was vanquished by Cyrus, and that his own army delivered him up to the Persian conqueror. With Cyrus the stock of the Persians in the first half of the sixth century B.C. assumed paramount power. The Persian dynasts, who, after Hakhamanishya, their ancestor, were known as the **Achaemenides**, were, it would seem, till now under the subjection of the Median rulers. But while the power of the Medes rapidly declined on account of the incursions and occasional government of the Scythians, hardly Aryan clans hailing from the North, the Persian might constantly increased. Since the time of Cishpis (Toispes) they possessed themselves of Elam, which had previously received from Asurbanipal its *coup-de-grace*, and thenceforward assumed, by perference, the style of princes of Anzan, at the same time[59] that they were the regents of Persia as well. Cyrus the Great, second of the name, the third according to some authorities,[60] was the first king of kings of Persian lineage, who, not content with the homage of all Iranian nations, annexed Lydia to the Asiatic possessions of his empire, and reduced by his victorious arms the whole of West Asia. The sovereignty remained from this time in the hands of the Achæmenides. But after the death of Kambyses II, the son of the Great Cyrus, and of the pseudo-Smerdes, Bardia, and of Gaumata, the Magian, the dynasty was transferred with Darius, Daravush, son of Hystaspes or Vishtaspa, to the younger branch. More than once the successor to the throne was

[59] In my paper on "Het land Anzan—Ansan" (Leyden, 1894) I have endeavoured to establish that Anzan or Ansan here signifies the part of Elam in which lay the capital of Susa. It is well known that this city was the favourite residence of Persian monarchs.

[60] Nöldeke who infers this from Herod. 7, 11. I think that Herodotus presents as *one* the genealogies of Xerxes and of Cyrus, and places them both by mistake one after the other. See his *Aufsätze zur Persischen Geschichte* p. 15. [These valuable essays have been contributed in an English version to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.—TR.]

not a lineal descendant but a distant kinsman of the preceding sovereign, and one who waded, through blood, to the sceptor. This formidable empire, however, despite its bad government, would not so soon have fallen to pieces, had the genius of the General Alexander to cope with a Cyrus or a Darius, son of Vishtaspa, and "the lances of Persian manhood," of which Darius boasted that they had reached far and wide, not been committed to the charge of an incompetent and vainglorious despot, who, too pusillanimous to die on the battlefield, was assassinated by one of his own satraps. With his fall commenced a new era, not only for the people at large, but likewise for the religion he had professed. The alien hegemony was not propitious to the native faith. Its renaissance was inaugurated with the rise of the Parthian house, which was Iranian. And this religious revival was consumated under the **Sassanides.** But that lies outside the province of our present research. The historical outline we have presented, and which was our objective, must suffice for a background to **the evolution of Zarathushtrian religion down to Alexander.** But before we embark on the latter exposition, we have to examine the soil into which the religion struck roots—to inquire (to put it differently) on, what anterior worship it was superposed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EAST IRANIAN RELIGION.

Of the religion out of which Zarathushtrianism was evolved, or at least which it superseded, we are left neither original records nor direct accounts. And yet it is possible to picture to ourselves its features, collocating for comparison the religious conceptions and ussges of the cognate tribes and establishing their common traits. The Iranian's next-of-kin in religion is the Indian. Both are the two enormous ramifications of a people which distinguished itself from its neighbours by the appellation of Aryan betokening its superiority to them. The languages which the two peoples spoke bear closer affinity than any others of Aryo-European or Indo-Germanic family of languages to which they belong, especially with reference to their primitive structure. Grammar and vocabulary, phraseology and declension, accord to a degree which compels us to derive them from one and the same antique tongue. **Indians and Iranians,** then, employed of yore **one language** which may best be christened **Aryan,** or, if the term should cover the whole family, the **East Iranian.** And it directly follows that they at one time dwelt in immediate vicinity, nay, in the self-same locality, and composed but one nation. *Where* this has been, we need not inquire here. All manner of conjectures have been advanced and advocated, but not one has till now won universal concurrence. We would have had to be satisfied with the answer "somewhere in Asia," but for the theory which some have enunciated of the European origin. But for us the problem is of subordinate significance. Suffice it to know that Iranian and Indian have been one folk. This postulate will elucidate the striking harmony in their tone of religious thought and will help us exhibit the salient characteristics of their common creed, so far as the vestiges thereof bequeathed to us render the task feasible. It is not

germane to our purpose to retrograde still backward and to propound the question whether the entire race which comprehended the Asiatic or East Iranian and kindred peoples constituted whilom a unity not linguistic alone but religious as well.

But first of all we stand face to face with the suggestion, which seeks to ascertain if whatever of religious basis the two peoples share in common cannot be looked upon as the consequence of a reciprocal intercourse, that is, as concepts and customs which they adopted the one from the other. And as a matter of fact this assumption has been made to explain all the instances of consonance in mythology and cult, in the names of deities and rites, and thus the nugatory results of the science of comparative religion and mythology are demonstrated, the whole structure erected by the latter with so much ingenuity and erudition crumbling to the ground. Sound strictures these capable of demonstrating the extravagance of the comparative method and the vindication of other methods of exposition, which latter in many a case strike the right nail on the head.

It is a pity, however, that the new theory falls into exactly the same insularity as the older one and stultifies itself by its extravagance. However that may be in general, borrowing is out of the question in our particular instance. It may be urged the Iranians and the Indians were something more than cognate; they resided in the closest proximity. Their bounds merged into each other at the Indus. Afghanistan affords an apt illustration. The language of this country is Pashtu. We are justified to number it among the Iranian dialects; and yet it so abounds with Indian ingredients that many a scholar has set it down as an Indian dialect, or at any rate an independent tongue very nearly akin to the Iranian.

What holds good of language, may not that have been true of religion in the earlier centuries? There is nothing intrinsically to militate against the possibility. But actually it is precluded. To indicate the most important objections alone: The common traits they disclose, from the religious standpoint, are not of the essence: at least they have no bearing on the more prominent

conceptions of the two several systems. They relate to the elements allowed on sufferance or those re-admitted after resistance. The points of contact, even when scrutinised individually, point to what we must regard as survivals of a bygone age. And these relics again, when separately examined in either religion, show that they have developed independently and peculiarly. They are at the same time in unison and apart from each other *toto caelo*. Mutual adoption would have involved, on the part of the Iranians, the assimilation of Indra and Agni; on the part of the Indians the absorption of Ahura Mazda and Vohumano. But Ahura Mazda and Vohumano have remained unknown to the Indians; and as for Indra, to the Iranian he is of the realm of the evil. What most claims our attention is that there is so much that is the same in the two creeds, but which in spirit and nature is wholly antagonistic, standing poles apart. In respect of one point we are doubtful, namely, touching the **Haoma-Soma worship.** The service of Soma in the Indian cult is a cardinal circumstance, but is so only in the later stage of Zarathushtrianism. It is nowhere alluded to in the Gathaic literature. The evident inference, consequently, is that a feature which takes a principal rank in the oldest document of a people, and which rises to importance at a subsequent period in another, is a loan from the former by the latter. Additional force is lent to the deduction when we remember that Haoma does not play anything like so prominent a part among the Iranians, which it enjoys among the Indians; that the Indians have dedicated one entire *mandala* of the *Rig-Veda* to it in its form of *Pavamana*; that its votaries, Indra foremost, indulge in boundless potations of the beverage, winding up with larceny and mortal fracas; and that they have an inexhaustible dictionary of its honorific epithets and a vast number of compounds, one of whose components is represented by Soma. The Iranians, on the contrary, are poor in this respect, less lavish, sparing even to parsimony in conferring titles on Haoma. To the Soma-imbibing Indians we find no parallel in the *Avesta*. It at the same time merits attention that in the solitary passage in all the Gathaic texts where

Haoma is mentioned, in the later addendum to the *Yasna Haptanghaiti*[61] we simultaneously come upon the Atharvans or Fire-priests "who come from afar." All this tends to make one suspicious as to the Soma-Haoma doctrine and as to the cult of it being the relic of the East Aryan epoch. It is indubitable that the East Aryans were acquainted with an immortalizing drink, for we find it among the Iranians, and it is equally traceable to the old Aryan or Indo-Germanic age. The myths and customs under consideration are at once ancient and universal. Their vestiges can be traced even to the non-Aryans. I am speaking only of the peculiar shape with which they are invested in the Soma-Haoma *latria*, and this form I am inclined to set down as comparatively later. Again, I am not of opinion that the Iranians adopted the Haomo direct from the Vedic Indians, and that "the Atharvans who came from afar" proceeded from the opposite bank of the Indus. It were then not so fundamentally divergent in its agreement with Soma, nor would it have been evolved so independently in Iran. And in that case it were not easy to differentiate it from Indra and Twahstra. In all probability the parent-land of the Haoma-Soma worship has to be sought on the Iranian river **Harakhvaiti,** whence it would disseminate itself east, north, and westward. In the name **Sarasvati,** then, which was bestowed by the Vedic Indians on the invisible stream between the Indus and the Ganges and on the banks of which they originally settled, we would have to look for a reminiscence of the holy river in whose vicinity the peculiar cult arose.[62] "

We now pass on to give **a conspectus of the religion of the East Iranians,** of the yet inseparate Indians and Iranians.

If they had still clung to a goodly number of animistic ideas and usages, nevertheless their religion was dicidedly polytheistic. The beings they invoked they addressed by a variety of honorific epithets :—The celestials (*deva—daeva*), the spirits (Asura—

[61] *Yasna*, 42, 5.

[62] This coincides with Hillebrandt's conjectures, *Vedische Mythologie*, I. 109. But all his hypotheses cannot be accepted.

Ahura), the affluent donors or lotdispensers (*bhaga,—bagha, baga*), the revered (*yajata—yazata*). Of these appellations the first two are of the most frequent occurrence in both the creeds; the last two are perhaps more in vogue in one clan than the other. Two of these, *deva* and *bhaga*, were current even prior to the East Iranian period, the first being very general, the second at least among the Slav people. Asura has its counterpart in the old Norse Asen, while Yajata is a congener of the Greek ἅγιος.

The divinities were nature-gods, and the sagacity and science with which men credited them must have been taken, to a large measure, for sorcery or a sort of supernatural wisdom not to be acquired in the way of ordinary meditation, a special divine endowment which none but the elect of humanity shared with the heavenly existences. But when these intelligences are credited with a beneficent government (*sukshatra—hukhshathra*) and are styled self-willed (*sajosha—hazaosha*), therein resides the germ of a belief in a definitely-ordained world.

At the head of the supernal world stand seven supreme spirits. And it is not without reason that **the seven Adityas of India** are thought to answer to as many **Amesha Spentas of Iran** We say not without reason because the figure remains constant, notwithstanding the objection that at times more than the well-known seven mentioned by Plutarch are reckoned, and that all the deities recognized as Adityas in the aggregate transcend the number. An enormous importance attaches to this sacred number in both the religions. To illustrate our claim by a few out of numerous examples, the Indian equally with the Persian divides the terrestrial sphere into seven continents, the *dwipas* of the one, the Keshwaras of the other; seven sacred rivers which are not to be distinguished from the seven tributaries of the Sarasvati; seven sacred minstrels (Saptarshi) of the Indians, whom the Iranian depicted in the seven stars of Ursa Major (Haptoirenga), and diverse symbolical, ritual operations in which the number recurs again and again. The number is both ancient and primeval, invested with religious sanctity by both. It has

its prototype again in the celestial world. The Zarathushtrian reformers added to the number their supreme spirits, inclusive of Ahura Mazda, but simultaneously replaced a couple of them by others, thus keeping to the original figure. The Indians styled them the sons of Aditi; but reckoned among them likewise Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman, and filled the remaining places at pleasure mostly by personification of abstractions. Now it happens that **Varuna, Mitra, and Aryaman** are precisely divinities of a category other than the one which appertains specially to the Vedic mythology and which are revered most in the Vedic period. Varuna, at any rate, takes more after a Semitic than an Aryan god. In his capacity of sovereign and lord of all (Samraj) and controller of the moral system of the world is he the dispenser of precious blessings, but he is at the same time feared as the judge of all transgressions which are brought to his knowledge, however concealed they remain from the eyes of others. To the Iranian, Mithra is principally the avenger of violated faith and the redoubtable guardian of pledge or truth, or compact. In the Vedic panthean the deity is not in her element. Mitra recedes in the background, and, as a nature-god, is supplanted by Indra and others. Only in conjunction with Varuna, with whom she forms a Dyad (*dvandva*), she retains something of her importance. Aryaman appears rarely alone in the *Rig-Veda* much oftener in company of Varuna and Mitra or with one of them or with one or more of the rest of the Adityas, but most commonly with the two first named, and once as forming an intimate triad[63]. Mitra and Aryaman are synonyms and properly connote 'friend' and 'bosom friend,' the second oftenest in the sense of 'friend of the bridegroom,' παρα νυμφιος, and this signification is yielded both in the Veda and the Avesta. Accordingly there is adequate ground to claim the inclusion of the three among the seven highest in the East Aryan period. The Zarathushtrian reformers elevated others to their position

[63] *Rig-Veda*, VII. 38, 4. Bergaigne, *Religion Vedique*, III. 98, and note to p. 102. [The *Avesta* form of the god is Mithra, the Vedic form being Mitra.—TR.]

and allotted to Mitra and Aryaman a place outside of the seven. Mitra was the potent divinity of lumination, thrust back in the Gathic period, but so intertwined with the popular beliefs that in a subsequent age he was of necessity reinstated among the Zarathushtrian Yazatas. His office it was to befriend and succour the faithful in fight, and he was, as we saw, protector of veracity and justice. Aryaman, whose presence the fraternity desiderate, perhaps was, as the name leads us to surmise, the guardian genius of the Aryan nation, the promoter of their prosperity and the cherisher of their fertility. And perhaps we may descry in Varuna the celestial reflex of the king, in Mitra that of the contumacious nobility, and in Aryaman that of a loyal populace.

For, that Varuna belonged of the cycle of the East Aryans period reposes on a well founded hypothesis. We may leave it undecided whether he was so early adored under that appellation or whether this designation is still older and is connected with the Greek Uranos. The first alternative has the weight of greater probability. We believe that the personified abstraction which passes under the name of Varuna in the Vedic times is more primeval than the religions, either Vedic or Avestaic. So its absence among the Iranians is tolerably explicable. Such as embraced the Zarathushtrian creed were unable to place another supreme deity in juxtaposition with Mazda Ahura, the omniscient Ahura. In the new scheme Varuna is superseded by a god, who is his equal in several respects, and who, similarly to him, is Ahura (Asura) *par excellence*. Varuna among the Indians was so intimately associated with the ethical and phenomenal world (which they denoted by the word *ṛta*) that he to a certain extent coincides with the latter, so much so that not without a show of reason is he characterized a personification of *ṛta*. Analogously, Mazda is as good as identical with Asha, the Iranian parallel of *ṛta*, whom the Zarathushtrians have also in a manner personified. Again, as Mitra is associated with Varuna in the *Veda*, so

too is Mitra with Ahura in the younger *Avesta*[64]. It is neither proved nor probable that this Ahura is another being than Ahura Mazda. There is equally meagre evidence for the supposition that the highest God of Zarathushtrian-system has supplanted Dyaus[65] (who is conspicuous by his absence among the Persians), but was not able to supersede the celestial deity Varuna. On the contrary, he unites in himself the importance of both who are many times curtly styled Asura. But in most aspects Ahura Mazda is in unison with Varuna, Dyaus is a most primeval nature-god dating back to ante-East Aryan times. In the Veda he occupies a place in the dogma, but in the liturgical exercitation he has sunk into nonentity[66]. Not, however, that Mazda Ahura is distinguishable from Varuna-Asura only by name. Mazda is a creation of the Zarathushtrian protestantism. But they are too similar the one to the other for both to be simultaneously adored ; and thus Varuna had to yield. When latterly Mitra was transferred from the popular creed to the Zarathushtrian scheme of religion, he could not remain conjoined with Varuna, but must stand in the same

[64] In the dual number and in different cases.

Yasna, I. 11.

[Mill notes, *S. B. E.* XXXI. 199 : The star Jupiter has been called Ormuzd by the Persians and Amrenians, and it may be intended here, as stars are next mentioned, but who can fail to be struck with the resemblance to the Mitra-Varuna of the *Rig-Veda*. Possibly both ideas were present to the composer.—TR.]

Yasna, II. 11.

Yasht, 10, 113.

[This passage is remarkable as showing the struggles of the faithful with the unbelievers : May Mitra and Ahura, the high gods, come to us for help when the poniard lifts up its voice aloud, when the nostrils of the horses quiver . . . . . , when the strings of the corns whistle and shoot sharp arrows ; then the brood of those whose libations are hated fall smitten to the ground, with their hair torn off (*S. B. E.* XXIII. 148-49).—TR.]

[65] Διά, in Herod. I. 131, is the accusative of Zévs, not of Dyaus. Herodotus means to express Ahura Mazda.

[66] The view here opposed is advanced by P. von Bardke. *Dyaus Asura, Ahura Mazda und die Asuras* ; Halle, 1885.

relation to Mazda which formerly he occupied with regard to Varuna.[67]

Recently the hypothesis has been assailed which imputed to the Indo-Iranian the loan of **the sacred number seven** from the Semites, and which sought to explain the figure by a reference to nothing more than the sun, moon, and the five planets. Varuna (and Ahura Mazda?) was supposed to be the moon, Mitra the sun, the remaining five the real or apparent minor luminaries[68]. This theory gives rise to serious doubts. The connection of the seven revolving heavenly bodies with the seven most exalted divinities is not so ancient as is supposed, and their identification has never been made out. Seven highest gods existed much earlier. Besides, the number is not Semitic by origin. It is Sumeric; and in all probability it is an idea as much belonging to the Sumerians as the pre-Semitic nations of West Asia. The sacred number of the Semites was three and also four, but their holiest was the product of the two or twelve. These they discarded in favor of the Sumerian seven, and probably the East Aryans, too, were indebted for it directly to the Sumerian. It is indeed remarkable that to the Aryans or Indo-Germans the number seven has had little import. And the Aryans or the Indo-Germans came in contact neither with the Sumerian nor with the Semites.

Beyond these seven, the East Aryans had other divinities, the wind-god Vayu, the belligerent god of heaven, the dragon-smiter Vṛtrahan, who reappears among the Indians as Indra and revives among the Persians as the genius of triumph,

[67] With reference to the whole problem, consult H. W. Wallis, *The Cosmogony of the Rig-Veda*, p. 100—about Rta and Varuna, *ibid.* p. 92. See A Hillebrandt, *Mitra und Varuna*; Bohenberger, *Der Altindishce Gott Varuna nach den Liedern des Rig-Veda*, 1893. Spiegel, who first in his *Eranischen Alterthumskunde* accepted the original unity of the Amesha Spentas and Adityas, has latterly receded from his position, *Cf. Die Arische Periode und ibre Zustande*: Leipzig, 1887, p. 19, and comp. C. Harlez, *Les Origines die Zoroastrianisme.* The text will show that I am unable to second the latest theories.

[68] Oldenberg, *Die Relegion des Veda*, pp. 185 and 193 *seq.* See my notice of it in the *Theol. Tigdsche*, 1895.

Verethraghna, and who is not always distinct from Tishtar (the latter's identification with the star Sirius cannot be aboriginal) ; and Armaiti who is represented in the Veda and the Avesta as the divine personification of piety and the head of the material world, and whom Zarathushtrians received among the satellites of Ahura Mazda, but who is not reckoned in India among the Adityas.[69] Dyaus, too, must have been worshipped, otherwise the Vedic Indian would not have preserved the memory of him.

There are unmistakable marks which point to the acquaintance of the East Aryans with **demi-gods or heroes,** if many of them were not already deities, who at a subequent age were degraded in rank. This fate may have befallen Trita Aptya or Traitana, the Thrita or Thraetona Athwya of the *Avesta*, originally the same water-god, or rather the god of light contending in the heavenly waters ; witness the resemblance of their names and the change of their rôles. And a like fall was not impossibly experienced by others of the heavenly beings. To the minor divine creatures belong Manu, the lumiferous god and father of mankind, of whom the *Veda* has a vivid recollection, and the *Avesta* a fainter one in Manus-Chithra ; Yama, in a measure a duplicate of the preceding, whom as Yima he wholly ousted in the *Avesta*,—a mythical king of the primordial humanity since perished and the judge of the dead ; Kṛçashva-Keresaspa, the vanquisher of monsters like Thraetona, and mentioned as his son in the legend ; finally, Kṛshanû-Keresani, the archer who watches over the ambrosia and discharges his darts at him who would rifle the same for humanity.[70] Besides, the much older and

[69] The form of the name in the *Avesta* is Armaiti, but the metre teaches that it must have been pronounced, also, Aramaiti in the *Gâthas*. The traditional significance of the word is in two places in the *Rig-Veda*, as in the *Avesta*, "the earth." It is not relevant here if this interpretation of Sayana is correct. It only shows that people still held fast to this sense even in India.

[70] About the Vedic Purañdhi and the Avestaic Parendi ar Pârendi, whose identity has been doubled by many, and, among others, by Spiegel, *Die Arische Periode*, p. 208 *seq.*, compare Pischel in the *Vedische Studien*, I. 205, who holds them to be identical and explains as the "fruitful." Tradition accords her dominions over the shades.

universally spread legends which Herodotus transfers to Cyrus the Great must already at this period have assumed the shape they present to the Indian and the Iranian. Furthermore, holy minstrels or sages were spoken of as a class of seers or sorcerers (Kavi, Kavya, Kavan), who were endowed with supernatural prescience, and from which class the later Persian tradition has derived an entire line of sovereigns. Of these were the sapient Ushanas (Kava Usa or Usadhan), his son-in-law Yayati, and his grandson Sushravas (Husravangh). The Indians recognize Ushanas as the magician preceptor of the Asuras, he who forged weapons for Soma and Indra and who awakes the dead. With the Iranians, he dominates the demons and makes an unsuccessful attempt at a journey to heaven. This journey the Indians attribute to Yayati. Husravangha is the prince of adventurers, and, in Iran, avenges the death of his grandfather on the Turanian miscreant Franrase. The basis of this folklore must have lain in a period preceding the East Aryan, that is, in old Aryan times, for we are spontaneously put in mind of Daedalus and Wieland the smith.[71] If such cunning wizards were reverenced, there were others, fabulous male enchanters called Yatus, whose machinations men dreaded, noxious spirits Druhas (Av. Drujas), the spirits of mendacity, and perhaps also the Danavas, fiendish demons who laid snares for man on all sides. Their craft was black magic, a terror to men, and for which they invoked the succour and protection of gods and heroes, but particularly the help of the aforsaid sages. The palm of satanity was assigned, as is evident from the honorific epithet of Vṛtrahan-Verethraghna mentioned above, and which is found among both the peoples, to Vṛtra the fiend, the exponent of the might of darkness. We cannot claim with absolute positiveness that the conflict of light and darkness, between the protectors of humanity and their foes, was not merely mythical and religious, but bore the ethical significance of victory of truth over falsehood and deceit, of right over

[71] Roth in *Z. D. M. G.*, II. 226.
Spiegel, *Beitrage*, IV., 41 *seq.*, and *Arische Periode*, pp. 281-287.

wrong. The characters of the foremost gods, pre-eminently Varuna and Mitra, go to countenance the supposition. And it is certain that the East Aryans venerated their dead as valiant opponents of cruel spirits (Shûrâsas-Surao) and as the righteous ones (ṛtavanas=ashaonish) and believed that they tasted of the heavenly water conferring immortality.

The concord in the cult of the Indians and the Iranians, characteristic divergences of the religions notwithstanding, shows that the germs thereof are traceable to the East Aryan period. **The cardinal or central point in the cult was, among both, the fire.** Only the great fire-god of the Indian bears another name than that of the Iranians. The former name it Agni, the latter Atar. The name Agni is an archaic word, as witness the Latin *ignis*. But it is more. It designates likewise an ancient Aryan deity ; compare Ogün, the name of the Slav or Wendish god of fire. Why it has been extinct among the Iranians can no more be determined ; nor do I feel called upon to hazard a guess. They had in common other ancient names of fire and of a sort which never could have denoted fire as such. One was *apam-napat*, the offspring of water, and Narashansa—Nairyosangha, which is usually understood to imply "laud of men," "the eulogized of men." By *apam-napat* is doubtless meant the lightning dazzling out of the clouds, the medium between heaven and earth, god and humanity. Narashansa is equally a messenger of the deity, in which capacity Nairyosangha figures in the *Avesta*. But before all, his being the same existence with whom the blest abide in heaven is an illuminating circumstance.[72] He is, perhaps, a kind of *psychopompus*, and his appellation must be interpreted as "he who rules over men, the human habitants of heaven." However that may be, the Iranian god of flames has been called Atar from immemorial antiquity—a name which became obsolete

[72] *Vendidad*, 19, 31 *seq.*

Bergaigne perceives in the name the prayer, literally, "the formula of men," which is not in keeping with the Iranian or the East Aryan god's character.

with the Indian, whilst derivatives of it continued to occur. One of these derivatives is Atharvan, fire-priest, which is the Iranians' usual and universal name for priest, but with the Indians as applied only to the primitive mythical servants of fire who brought the element down from the heavens. The fourth *Veda* is called after it. This *Atharva Veda* is, as a collection, the youngest, but is the least advanced so far as religious evolution is concerned. Take all this in connection with the impossibility of explaining[73] the word as such out of Iranian languages. and the inference is apparent that the denomination of the fire-god most in vogue in the East Aryan period was Atar, and that of its priest Atharvan. Naturally, all the myths which relate to the heavenly fire and the deity presiding over the element—its origin, its miraculous potency and blessings, the stealing of the celestial fire, which the gods would preserve from men—how ancient so ever, and however universally disseminated, are posterior to the ceremonies observed at its ignition, renewal, and perpetual continuance. The ceremonies primarily constituted no cult of fire regarded as a divine existence, but were mystic, magical operations which did not grow into a cult till fire had attained to the dignity of one of the superior powers and its effects were held to influence celestial phenomena as well. And both the peoples have conserved somewhat of its original character in the sacrifices to fire.

The Indians and Iranians lived in the closest proximity, yet borrowing and imitation on part of either are out of the question with reference to fire-worship. This service has unfolded itself among each of the folks so independently and peculiarly, the legends associated herewith have been developed on such independent lines, that they defy the explanation of mere borrowing. Each instance of similarity must be considered as arguing that the cult was remarkable, even at the epoch of their first existence, for the special veneration of fire.

[73] Some derive it from *ad*, to eat, *adtar*, the eater, the devourer, which at least is not impossible.

It is, as we saw, somewhat otherwise with the Soma worship. We very much doubt that Soma, the god who derived his name from the intoxicating beverage which was extracted from a plant, and which was diluted with honey, milk, and water, in order to be consecrated to the deity—a drink which was indulged in to intoxication—was an East Aryan god, and that the rite was then in common practice. But our sceptism refers to this particular form or phase alone. The East Aryans were unquestionably acquainted with a hallowed spirituous liquor, of what ever description and name, a counterpart of the celestial draught conferring immunity from death yclept Amrta, which means ambrosia. This designation the Indians repeatedly bestow upon Soma. The sacred twins Haurvatat and Ameretat, represent the food and the drink of the denizens of heaven to the Iranians, and, in fact, are a personification of them. The most ancient mythical priests, the Indian Vivasvat, Yama, Trita Apatya, probably belonged originally to the same class and were subsequently converted into the devotees of Soma, while in Iran, Vivanghat, Yima's father, Thrita and Athwya were the oldest adorers of Haoma. But so early as the East Aryan era this beatific inebriation was not unknown. In it the unsophisticated natural man beheld a new and loftier life, invigoration of heart and energy, superhuman inspiration, but, before all, a way to prevision, precience, and wisdom transcending human faculties. The term which they employed to express this mental condition, *mada* (Av. Madha),[74] has, with but a slight modification, the like significance for both the nations, and hence it cannot but have been in vogue at the time of their co-inhabitance.

[74] This word occurs as early as in the *Gathas*. The traditional interpretation of it is "sagacity," "knowledge," but it can only mean the supernatural "science" which results from the inspiration consequent upon the intoxicating drink. As for *madhu*, "sweet."—German *meth*, English "mead"—which is employed to signify Soma as well as honey and wine, it is either another word, or, according to Weber (*Vedische Beitrage in Sitz. Ber. der K. Akad.* Berlin, 1894, p. 13 *seq.*), the same word used only latterly in this sense.

It goes without saying that the *latria* of fire and the worship of the drink of immortality as a divine existence, and the magical operations appertaining to it, did not originate first in the East Aryan period. Without having recourse to the maze of comparative mythology one may take it for demonstrated that both the forms of the cult date from anterior times. Even though not a few of the corresponding features which the mythologists flatter themselves to have discovered in all Aryan or Indo-Germanic fables,[75] relating to the god of fire and the celestial potion, are not free from suspicion and objections, there remains a good deal which has been positively established and which shows that the roots of these concepts and customs lie deeper than in the Indo-Iranian stratum. There is no dearth of indications permitting the assumption that the existence of these forms of the cults extend beyond the Aryan world and warranting the conjecture that the worship of Dionysos, a divinity of fertility and of higher life as the consequence of a supernal beverage, has emanated from the Semites, or that even they had it a loan from a preceding civilization. Let us not, however, trench upon this far removed region. Here we have only to exhibit that both the cults constituted but one form among the East Aryans, and that it has prolonged its term of life into the Indian and Iranian ages, though it has had a development proper to itself in each people and has by consequence been subjected to alterations.

In the sacrifice the central point was the **prayer,** the spoken word. The priest is called the "invoker, the supplicator," which designation is retained in the Indian *hotṛ*,[76] Iranian *zaotar*. And both the nations have from the remote past, when they were one people, preserved a variety of technical expressions along with these names,—terms connected with the invitation to the offering, the presents and their bestowal, the

[75] Kuhn. *Die Herabkanft des Feuers und des Gottertranks bei den Indogermanen*.

[76] *Hotar* can be derived from *hu*, to pour out (sacrificial drink), as also from *hu*, to express, to pray, and the latter agrees with the primary meaning of the term for priest.

axioms, the prayers, the hymns, the adoration and glorification of ethereal existences, the consecrated water, the operation of the sacrifice and the physical state in which they must be conducted. So much as the very quaint views like a belief in the purificatory virtue, in a religious sense, of the urine of cattle which were necessarily sacred animals from immemorial antiquity, and the solicitude with which the desecration of fire and water was avoided are alike shared by the Indian and the Iranian, which shows that they have been transmitted from the ages of their unity.

But the result of the greatest moment of a comparison of the two religions is that the East Aryans must have already built a community, a community invested not with a national alone, but with a very definite religious character also. Provisionally men were admitted into the creed immediately after birth with certain rites. But when the neophyte had attained to years of discretion, and was brought up to his proper status, he was initiated. The symbols of the initiation were a sacred girdle and a cord. The mental training which qualified a man to be a member of the order is concentrated in one word, which has no exact equivalent in our language, and all the various shades of its meaning it is impossible to convey through a single word in another tongue. It comprises all that is becoming, befitting, in conformity with the community, and at the same time in an exalted sense connotes what with reference to the fraternity is righteous, erect, equitable, holy. It is applied to observance of religious obligations, to obedience, to prescriptive usages.[17] An unprejudiced investigation of the word requires the recognition of its two-fold import in the *Veda* as well as the *Avesta*. And it is not improbable that early in the East Aryan period it bore, along with an ecclesiastical, an ethical sense or significance.

[17] *Art*, wherefrom Sk. *ṛta*, Baktrian *asha*. The word expressive of the genuinely pious man, as they conceived him, is the same among the Indians and the Iranians: *ṛtavan—ashavan*. Bergaigne, Darmesteter and others have laid stress upon the neglected ritualistic significance. But more correct is Spiegel, *Die Arische Periode*, 13 and 30. De Harlez, in his *Origines du Zoroastrianism* (p. 74 *seq.*), perhaps idealizes too much.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CAUSES OF THE DIVERSITY OF THE INDIAN AND THE IRANIAN RELIGIONS, NOTWITHSTANDING THEIR COMMON DESCENT.

We endeavoured in the preceding section to give a cursory sketch of the East Aryan faith, basing our delineation on the relics to be met with in the Indian and Iranian religions, which prove that these two have sprung, if mediately, from the former. The coincidences cannot be fortuitous, and so they admit of no other explanation save that of sameness of origin. But we shall not call it into question that the Vedic and the *Avesta* religions are conspicuously divergent in respect of their peculiar dogma, their character, with regard to their cult, and in point of their ethics. The problem before us is: wherein lie the causes of this vast dissimilarity in their common heritage? Nay, dissimilarity is too weak and inadequate an expression. The religions are diametrically opposed. To the devout Zarathushtrian those beings are evil genii whom the Brahman adores, the Vedic ritual of Soma offering a revolting *orgie*, the Brahman's cremation an abominable sacrilege to the sacrosanct fire, his recluse life in solitary contemplation a repudiation of the grand law of practical activity which sanctifies the earth and cripples the might of the demons. Whence this sharp contrast? The answer which suggests itself at the first blush is that the making or the formation of the two religions is different; nor is the solution incorrect. **The Vedic religion has sprung,** that is, has by degrees evolved itself under the influence of the leading families and Brahmanic schools out of the materials of the East Aryan religion. It is the organization of the peculiar form which the latter assumed when its professors settled in new places of habitation and saw themselves encircled by the representatives of an

alien cult, which, if it was not lower, at least corresponded to social conditions other than their own. Though their own cult, therefore, was but slightly modified, figures of new deities were associated with those they continued to pay homage to, and were pushed to the forefont, infusing fresh blood into their polytheism. On the other hand, **the Zarathushtrian faith** has been what **we are accustomed to disignate founded**—in other words, has issued from the gospel of a certain prophet or the combination of a seer and sage, who, in the name of Zarathushtra, apostle of God, proclaimed a new doctrine. It has, therefore, been evoked by a reformation. (That the movement was a reformation will be discussed in the ensuing chapter.) But that is not the whole solution. The religious innovation of every nation is rooted in the past of the soil, saving when the new teaching is of outlandish origin, like Islam in Persia, Christianity in Germany, or Buddhism in China. Then it stands contrasted with the national creed. It combats it, it endeavours to oust it, but is eventually constrained in order to secure a footing, to respect certain old ineradicable prejudices, traditions, and customs which it seeks, as best it may, to bring in a line with its own. But whatever foreign influence affected the constitution of the Zarathushtrian religious discipline (a question to which we return in the sequel) nothing exists in the sacred writings to justify the assumption of its being an exotic in the soil of Iran, or that it grew first among a people other than Iranians. Its religious books are neither wholly nor in part translated from an alien speech. Not a name of its Ahura, Amesha Spentas or Yazatas, but has an Aryan ring—most of them are, as we shall see further on, quondam popular gods modified. An imported religion bears an aspect totally different.

Now, if the Zarathushtrian religion is called forth by a reformation, this religious upheaval could not have taken place prior to the separation of the Indo-Iranians. It was initiated at a later date. The contrary is at all events advanced in the well-known theory of Martin Haug, which

makes the disruption of the East Aryans into Iranians and Indians the result of a religious schism. This view,[78] to which now but few scholars adhere, derives its plausibility from the striking circumstance among the two races, that while both have so many religious concepts and practices in common, the gods of the one are the wicked spirits of the other, and, conversely, the intelligences which here are abominated and warred against are there the recipients of adoration. Devas (Daevas), Asuras (Ahuras), were both undeniably names applied to divine beings from times immemorial. The first term was probably generic, betokening all heavenly powers, inclusive of terrestrial potentates; the second was less indiscriminately employed, being reserved for the most exalted ones. It is true that Asura has gradually acquired with the Indian, partly in the Vedic era, a derogatory significance in that the spirits so styled are hostile to the Devas, who have perpetually to be on their guard against their magic and nefarious arts; with the Iranians Ahura remained the name of reverence for their supreme deity, always in a favourable sense. Again, while the Indian kept on calling his gods *devas*, *daeva* came to be synonymous with the Iranian's *drukhsh*, "the spirit of falsehood," and was employed to exclusively denote the creatures and servants of evil that the God-fearing Mazdayasnian must combat with all his might. There is no denying these facts, but the conclusions sought to be educed therefrom do not hold water. More penetrating examination reveals that they must be elucidated in another way.

In the first place, long after the Indians had settled on the banks of the Sarasvati and the Ganges, the word **Asura** retained its elevated sense. In the hymns of the *Rig-Veda*, the word, with most of its derivatives, is still an honored epithet of the most exalted and the mightiest of the gods of the old East Aryans, and, above all, of the foremost of them, Varuna. Nor is it confined to them. The younger genuine titulary deities of India—Indra, Agni, Soma Rudra—are all spoken of

[78] This hypothesis of Martin Haug was accepted thirty years ago by me and also by eminent specialists.

as Asuras. Only occasionally, and for the most part in the later books of the Rk, it is that we have to suspect a reference to wizard spirits inimical to the celestials.[79] And not till we come down to the *Atharva Veda* and the *Brahmanas* that this sense is found to preponderate. But even then the Asuras are exhibited to us in the light not of creatures diabolical by nature, not of fiends proper, but as rivals of the *devas* and obnoxious to their devotees. The word which, *per se*, originally conveys the general sense of "spirits or beings" itself occasioned its twofold employment. At all events, the modification in question has been brought about unforced, by degrees, and on Indian soil, and has no connection with any religious reformation in Iran or with the establishment of the latria of Mazda.

On the other hand, the Iranians have more than one god to whom the Indians pray as to *devas*, to wit, Mitra Aryaman Soma. The Iranian comprehends them under the general appellations of Yazata and Bagha, without belying his Zarathushtrian creed. Only a couple of passages[80] characterize a few solitary Indian deities as hostile to the Zarathushtrian Yazatas—passages which are very late, and which surely cannot be assigned to the incipient stage of the Mazdayasnian fraternity.

In fine, throughout the *Veda* there is no trace of a conflict with the dogma of Zoroaster and not the faintest testimony that the minstrels and the Brahmans were cognisant of the worship of Mazda, which would have been the case to a certainty had hostility to the reform movement led the Indians to secede from

[79] In the oldest books the name occurs a few times—II. 30, 4, and VII. 99, 5; once in the youngest book—X. 138, 3, where it is assigned to a certain spirit. The 8th book, which is not of the oldest, speaks of the non-daivic Asuras. The three remaining places, where the word is used in the plural of the existences hostile to the Devas, belong to book 10. They are, 53, 4; 151, 3; and 157, 4. In the derivative Asurahan, Asura-killing, which sometimes we meet with as an honorific epithet, the first member has naturally an unfavourable significance. Asura and Asurian denote as often the devine as the demoniac. Then, again, in the compound *muradeva* the insane *deva*, applied also to sorcerers (VII. 104, 24), *deva* has a bad sense.

[80] Indra, Sauru (*çarva? i. e.*, *çiva*) and the Naonhaitya (Nasatya).—*Vendidad*, 10, 9; 19, 43.

their union with the cognate sept and to wander far afield in search of a separate habitat of their own.

Accordingly, though we cannot subscribe to the hypothesis that the Vedic and the Zarathushtrian religions sprang when both the tribes were still flourishing together, and that the rise of religious innovations occasioned dissension, perhaps a crusade, still it has an atom of validity in it. No external circumstances in themselves are capable of explaining the radical differences which obtain between the two systems that have issued from one and the same source. The centrifugal or diverging tendencies in both must have been present at least in an embryonic stage in the East Aryan period subsequently to break out with such distinct sharpness. That they culminated in an open rupture is probable. The split was presumably more acutely felt than overtly avowed. It, however, contributed to an estrangement between the brother clans, and it strikes me as likely that this was what in fact happened. Nevertheless, the birth of the Vedic as well as the Zarathustrian religion was posterior by far to their separation. Neither of the systems is the direct outcome of the East Aryan religion. A considerable interval must have elapsed between their genesis and the disjunction of the old Aryan community during which the archaic faith unfolded itself in diverse mutually antithetical currents. The probabilities are that subsequent to the settlement in India the one tendency first attained to consolidation, and that Zarathushtrianism represented the other tendency long after, and, inasmuch as it answered to the spirit or genius of the Iranian nation, it found its way among them.

But external circumstances likewise co-operated to bring about the result. The fertile India lying under a warm sky, with its luxuriant vegetation and its superabundance of everything, made sustenance, without considerable exertion, possible, conducing in the end to indolence, tranquil meditation, and self-absorption. Surrounded on the two sides by ocean and cut off in the North and North-West from other peoples by high chains of mountains and a great river, the new in-dwellers of India were deprived

of all oppurtunities to participate in the historical development proceeding in the West. The Indian Aryans began by waging war upon the autochthonous tribes who disputed with the intruders the possession of the land. In many Vedic hymns we perceive the echo of their struggles. The martial Soma-drinking Indra, with his stormy Maruts, at whose head was the terrible Rudra, were more than Varuna and his circle, the dominant gods, appropriate to the stirring times. Even Agni, more of a divinity of the priest than the warrior, engaged several times in Indra's battles. But after the termination of the conflict between the new lords and the natives, the might of the latter being broken and the supremacy of the Aryans assured, when the internecine feuds which the Aryans carried on to their immense detriment had subsided, and when there was little incentive to deeds of valour, little occasion for eruption and invasion, the people would yield themselves in their undisturbed prosperity to their predilection for speculation or philosophy.

Iran, on the contrary, is, as we said before, in comparison to India, an indigent country, fertilized by no great rivers, having an arid soil, and a frequetly unfriendly and very unequal climate. He who would enjoy there the sweets of life must work in the sweat of his brow and extort scanty produce from a reluctant soil. Protected by nature only in the East, and but partially in the west, its northern frontier is entirely exposed to the incursion of wild hordes, who, famishing in a still more sterile region, inundate the land in serried masses as often as they can reckon on a successful foray. Along its western marches it was abandoned to the ambition and ferocity of the Babylonian and Assyrian monarchies. A people who took up their abode in such a clime must be prepetually on their guard and under arms, else, as it happened not rarely, it was ravaged by a merciless enemy; and the moment the authority of the invaders declined, there followed the inevitable inroads on their side to avenge the discomfiture. Such latitudes breed no anchorites or ascetics, nor speculative thinkers either, but men of action who conceive

life as a constant struggle against the powers of darkness and evil. Vigilance and energetic activity, the grand commandments of the Zarathushtrian *daena*, were laws which nature imposed on the land long before they stood inscribed in the *Avesta*.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOUNDING OF THE ZARATHUSHTRIAN RELIGION AND THE FIRST PERIOD OF ITS DEVELOPMENT.

The Zarathushtrian Religion a Reformation.

The religion which we study **in the Gathas** and the writings connected with them, and whose subsequent history is embalmed in books indited in a younger dialect, is not the result of a tardy unraveling evoked by the altered environments of a people and consequently what is usually called a natural growth, but **an actual deliberate** reform. Not, however, that the new faith had no **roots in the past.** On the contrary, when it voices unfamiliar thoughts, the forms in which they are clothed are borrowed in the vast majority of cases from religious concepts and notions prevailing from remote antiquity. Even the cardinal thought on which it rests, its sharply-defined **Dualism,** the irreconcilable contest between the power of the Good and the power of the Evil, is based on the old Aryan myth the wars of light and darkness, fertility and sterility, life and death in a higher and ethical sense. The fact is incontrovertible, though we cannot infer from it that the Dualism as such is derived from the same myth.[81] Had it been otherwise, the new doctrine would never have found access to the people. Nor is the doctrine, as will be shown later on, introduced from without. Though it may contain many foreign ingredients, it is a growth of the native soil, national in form and origin. It is a germ of the old stock, which has not shot up as a weed, but has been carefully planted and has thriven into an individual tree. **The Zarathushtrian creed** has not sprung up of its own accord. **It was founded.** Bearing this fact in mind, we

[81] Darmesteter's *Ormazd et Ahriman; leurs origines et leur histoire*—Paris, 1877. It is superfluous to observe that subsequently he altogether changed his opinion.

shall be in a position rightly to understand it, and **the evidences** are not far to seek to every unbiassed reader of the *Gâthas*. The concept that the world is parted into two hostile camps, the empire of perfectly holy spirits and that of absolutely evil creatures, empires which are divided off by a neutral zone which is the theatre of their struggles, may have existed in the East Aryan, possibly even in the old Aryan, mythology, but then not as an unequivocally formulated article of faith, but only as an embryo of one. Latterly, myths of an earlier period were transferred to the two spirits. But in the form they both occur in the oldest hymns, they are the philosophical creations of the speculations of religious innovators of a school or sect. This applies before all to the highest God **Mazda and his satellites.** The Jehova of Moses is not more distinct from the thundering god of the heavens in the desert than is the Mazda Ahura of the *Gâthas* from the celestial deities of light or from any other divinity of the ancient Aryans. The entire scheme no longer represents a natural religion, but is converted into a definite ethical system. At the outset we have to allude to the otherwise inexplicable circumstance that the collective Aryan mythology, the dogma held by the preceding generations, is not touched upon in the *Gâthas*. The *Gâthas* are silent respecting all **the old divinities, including Mithra** the most prominent among them. But at that time the gods were by no means forgotten They had obviously still a number of devotees in Iran. And these were so numerous that in a later age people saw themselves compelled to enter these gods once again into the catalogne of adored beings, accommodating them to the orthodox tenets. Mithra was accordingly honored with a niche by the side of Mazda, which he had before occupied, and which he has ever kept, among the neighbouring Indians, by the side of Varuna. Again, the *Gâthas* mention none of **the heroes,** several of whom were to be subsequently reinstated as transformed into Zarathushtrian Yazatas. **Yima** is the solitary exception. He is the Vedic Yama, but in the *Gâthas* he becomes a saint of the

past and is held up to the Mazda worshippers as a prototype.[82]

The place of the old occupants of heaven is now assumed by **Mazda Ahura with his retinue of six Ahuras,** making seven in all—**the Amshaspands** that were to be. And with them was associated Sraosha, the genius of obedience and revelation. In other words, the position of deified beings was ceded to more or less personified abstractions, the least personified being those in the oldest epoch, but not more personified than is wisdom with the Hebrew poets.

One spirit alone, **Armaiti,** the Vedic Aramati, of whom we have spoken above, appears to constitute an exception. But she had already in the East Aryan age a two-fold significance, and one phase of her character was appropriated to the symbolization of a Zarathushtrian idea. The heroes are supplanted by **Zarathushtra himself, his kin and friends.** So far it can be no accident, but only intention. Had the *latria* of Mazda been envolved step by step from the previops popular national religion, we should encounter the favorite gods and heroes of the ancestral creed in shapes however modified.

Not less emphatically it bespeaks the reforming mission of Zarathushtra that the *Gâthas* are altogether silent over **the Haoma service,** which built a principal and uninterrupted

[82] The passage to which I refer is usually interpreted in a totally different manner. *Yasna 32, 8:—aesham aenangham vivanghusho sravi yimaschit ye mashyeng chikshminusho ahmakeng gaush baga hvaremno. Aeshamchit a āhmi thwahmi mazda vichithoi aipi.*

The usual rendering of *aenangham* by "evil-doers" and of the second verse as if it told us that Yima first instructed mankind how to eat flesh in pieces, wholly spoils the sense. For the latter is a grammatical as well as logical impossibility. Even in the earliest possible times men could not have thrust a whole ox or sheep into the mouth. The Zarathushtra or priest says;—"Vivanghat, son of Yima, heard of this punishment (mentioned in the preceding strophe) and he (accordingly) instructed the human race (to give) us a part of the meat they ate. What comes to me thereof, depends on thy decision, Mazda!"

[The difficulty of the *Gâtha* texts is strikingly illustrated by this passage. How widely divergent is Mill's interpretation, who opines that "the Pahlavi translator hits the true rendering here and recalls Genesis ix., 3, regarding the first eating of the flesh of beasts"!—TR.]

factor in the cult of the Vedic Indians, and which, even in Iran, posterity had to reinstall. Not once is mention made of its name. If the Soma-Haoma service originated so far back in the East Aryan times as is generally assumed at present, it is unintelligible, especially in view of the importance attached to it in later Parsiism, how the *Gâthas* completely ignore it, [88] the only alternative supposition being that the silence is of set purpose and is owing to the abhorrence of the exponents of the new dogma for those who were partial to the drink, which was of the essence of their cult. But there are, as already indicated, some grounds for the assumption that the Haoma worship proper had not spread universally among the ancient Iranians, and that it was leagued with Zarathushtrianism after the propagation of the Mazdaic religion into the Eastern countries. This, however, is true only of Soma-Haoma, *i. e.*, of the beverage extracted from plants. The Iranians, too, like all Aryan nations, were probably aware of another immortalizing drink which they quaffed at certain religious ceremonies. Such a peculiar drink as the Soma, distasteful to many, could hardly have been anything but a surrogate for another intoxicating liquor, and (indeed, to my mind, of wine itself or a similar substance discovered by roaming tribes who cultivated no vine and could not obtain it by way of commerce), esteemed not so much as a favourite beverage as an indispensable constituent in an immemorial cult. We can cite passages from the oldest litanies, which seem to bear on such a cult, at all events on an ambrosial drink. But this is an uncertain test, and at any rate the drink there has not that importance in the divine service, which is assigned to it in the posterior times.

Above all, the unique character of **the Gathas**, and the tenets laid down in them, show that the latter have not sprung

[88] From two passages in the *Gâthas* Martin Haug deduced that the Haoma worship was not ignored but warred against in the old hymns, namely *Yasna* 32, 2, where for *Shyomam* he would read Saomam (shaomam), and *Yasna* 48, 10, where he corrected the corrupt reading *madahya*, the only one known to him into *madhahya* which he explained as an intoxicating drink, But *Saoma* among the Iranians can never mean *Haoma*, and as for the second passage in question, the best MSS, have *magahya*, a wholly different thing.

spontaneously from the popular religion, but have issued from the genius of some (or rather one) thinker. These hymns, though they embrace panegyrics and prayers, are for the most part prophecies, not however, in the sense of predictions, but in that of proclamations, and exhortations **apologia for a new doctrine and its cult**. Let us, for instance, listen to the exordium of *Yasna* 30:—" Now will I proclaim," so it runs, „ to you who are assembled here the wise sayings of Mazda, the praises of Ahura, and the hymns of the good spirit, the sublime truth which I see arising out of these sacred flames." This is immediately followed by the exhortation:—" Hear with your ears the best, see with a good mind, make a decided choice, man for man, each for himself, regarding this great Cause, attentive to this our dogma." This is the pervading tone. **The sage** is not simply a sacred poet inspired by the divine afflatus, who would glorify the solemn cult and the efficacy of the sacrifice by new songs. He is rather **the incarnation of Ahura Mazda** who has revealed all to him, of whom he constantly inquires, whom he perpetually interrogates.[84]

After the examples of Zarathushtra, who declared himself ready for the difficult task of propagating the faith among men, he would preach to all who came from near and far so long as life and strength are vouchsafed to him, and prays to Mazda that men may lend ear to his *manthras*.[85] And when the **Saoshyants'** prophet-saints, are spoken of, who bring about renovation of the world, this refers—and we shall prove it further on—not to a distant future but to the times gone by, and by the prophet-saints, through whose mouth they voice their thoughts, the minstrels mean the diffusers of the Zarathushtrian doctrine.[86]

[84] *Yasna* 31, 22; 33, 13; 34, 12.

[85] Compare *Yasna* 43, 11 with 28, 4 and 45, 1 and 28, 7.

[86] See *Yasna* 30, 9, where it plainly stands, " may we then belong to you we who (or so that we) consummate this renovation of the world." Even Spiegel has seen that tradition here cannot be relied upon. Only Darmesteter as ever, remains true to it. Observe also *Yasna* 31, 2; 32, 6; 33, 13; 34, 14; 44, 13; 45, 11; 50, 6; 51, 3 and 10.

They do not meet with a uniform audience or find listeners everywhere. In the seven continents of the world prevails infidelity fostered by **the imposture of the Druksh.** It is not every one who is prepared forthwith do decide his choice and renounce the fraternity of the *daevas* and the damned.[87] Recalcitrants are numerous, who refuse to give in their adhesion to the new institutes, while they are supported by lying prophets. There are the ignorant who instruct the ignorant: to lend ear to them is dangerous. They kill reason and incite those who pursue their evil counsel to turn pasture into wastes and persecute the pious with the sword.[88] Not seldom the prophets complain of the difficult mission: they have laid to heart the dogma of Mazda through sorrow and suffering. The oppressors of the true faith are unrelenting in their hatred.[89] Repulsed with incredulity by their own friends and kinsmen they sigh under misunderstanding, violence, outrage, and penury. Almost with despondence bewails one of the prophets (the bard no doubt means Zarathushtra):—" Where to of all the world shall I go, which way shall I turn me? " and he consoles himself with the confidence he has in divine protection and the sustaining hope that he would win over to his side Kava Vishtaspa and his entourage.[90] It is evident that the singers merely transfer to the eminent personages of yore what they themselves purposed and experienced.

The object of the reform to which the *Gâthas* testify is two-fold: a purification of the religion coupled with the announcement of a new, more ethical theology and an improvement in the social condition by means of a progressive exchange of the nomadic and bucolic life for the more **settled occupation of husbandry.** With the Gathaic poet, genuinely pious man, ardent cultivator, and just master are only synonymous expressions. To wish to participate in the practice of the good

[87] *Daevaishcha khrafashtraish mashyaishcha, Yasna* 34, 5, which mentions not three but only two categories. *Cf. Yasna* 31, 13 and 18; 32, 3, 9, 10, 11; 34, 5; 50, 3; 51, 14. For unbelief, see *Yasna* 32, 2; and on the right choice, *Yasna* 30, 2 and 31, 5.

[88] *Yasna* 34, 7 and 8. [89] *Yasna* 33, 7 and 8. [90] *Yasna* 46, 1 *seq.*

religion, without cherishing tillage, is nothing but hypocrisy Agriculturists are the only rational people, men after the heart of Asha and Vahumano. Such as abide, but do not co-operate, with them, and follow their own profane avocations, do but promote Aesma or Hatred because of their folly, advance Rāma or Jealousy because of their vile language, and further the interests of the *daevas* in general with their deceitful precepts.[91] The two motives are so intrinsically united, that a **social reformation** arose, which was ultimately **wedded to an ethical creed,** or rather which entirely reposed on it from its very beginnings. The most primitive records witness to Zarathushtrianism being such a combination. And we may note by the way that it speaks for its relative antiquity. Centuries after Alexander there was no call for the introduction of agriculture into Iran, nor need a life of fixed domicile have been recommended as acceptable in the sight of God. A religious incentive to agricultural pursuits belongs to hoary antiquity. But be that as it may, the Mazda religion has ever retained this peculiar feature of its origin, and whether or not the dogma was subsequently accommodated to other surroundings and other conditions, the active and energetic husbandman remained the type of devout Zarathushtrian. The veneration and the sanctification of cattle common to the Indian and the Iranian have their sources in a much anterior period. But its latest presentment apart, the ancient view assumed a peculiar shape in the scheme inaugurated by Zarathushtra, the symbolic significance of which

[91] See *Yasna* 31, 10 and 33, 3. Of Aeshma and Rama tradition makes hatred and jealousy (*Yasna* 49, 4). The strophe is very difficult. I think that *toi* with which the fourth line begins should be referred back to *yoi* in the first line, that *daeveng* cannot be Nom. but is Acc. Plur, and that *dregvato daena* is an instrumental from ; I would consequently translate :— " They create the *daevas* by the doctrine of the liars." Compare the celebrated colloquy between Geush Urna and Mazda Ahura in *Yasna* 29 and further *Yasna* 31, 15 and 51, 5, &c. See also *Yasna* 47, 2 and 3 :— "Wisdom is inculcated by word of mouth and the work of Armaiti is performed by the hands."

The Karapans, who are the great enemies of the pious, are not amicably disposed to tillage and attack the kine and her blessings by their acts and tenets.—*Yasna* 51, 14.

is still misjudged by many. The reformers here linked themselves to the earlier mythic conceptions which they attempered to the requirements of their *credenda*.

When we reflect upon its semi-philosophic, semi-religious tenor, the doctrine is anything but a poet or thinker's transmutation of popular beliefs. It is a well-conceived and tolerably coherent system, in which the uppermost dignity is accorded to a moral God encircled by beings and spirits commanding homage from man and composing his divine council. But these celestial apparitions are too diaphanous impersonations of the permanent attributes and principal blessings of this Godhead to come within the purview of mythology proper. A system of this description cannot evolve itself gradually among a God-fearing nation, but can only be thought out and preached with the full consciousness of its being the best revelation from on high in a school of divines and sages.

The sketch we intend to give of this system will itself furnish the most convincing proof of it. But a glance at the native country and at the origin and the founder of the Zarathushtrian faith must precede our outline of the reformation.

CHAPTER IX.

ZARATHUSHTRA AND HIS ENTOURAGE IN THE GÂTHAS

Throughout the *Avesta* **Zarathushtra** passes for **a great reformer,** one to whon Ahura Mazda has disclosed his revelation and who communicates the same to humanity. Not less than the views of the learned, the reports of the Oriental and Greek writers differ as to the author of this religion. If, according to some he was a contemporary of Hystaspes, father of Darious,—a view which has obviously resulted from confounding Hystaspes with the Vishtaspa of the Zarathushtrian legends,—in the opinion of others he lived six centuries prior to the beginning of the Christian era, while there are those who would go still farther back. If a few call him a Median, a Persian, or a Medo-Persian, others declare him to have been a Baktrian or even a Babylonian. It is impossible to educe historical facts out of this medley of accounts; and the more so because Herodotus, on whom we may rely with the greatest confidence, makes no mention of Zarathushtra.

The name itself of Zarathushtra is not easy to interpret. Whichever way it is construed we have to recognise an anomaly in the compound word—a deviation from the rules of Iranian phonetics. It is unintelligible how the Greeks came by the formation **Zoroastros**, as it is against all the Oriental metamorphoses of the appellation, and the one we find in Diodorus is probably borrowed from Ktēsias, *viz.*, Zathraustes, which, however, makes a nearer approach to the original. Semitic derivation (which has been attempted) was foredoomed to failure. It could not surmount the difficulty which lies in the *th* and which is not solved by the suggestion of Sir Henry Rawlinson who would make Zarathushtra equal to the Assyrian

Ziruishtar. The name is undoubtedly Aryan, but perhaps it belongs to a stage in the evolution of the language preceding the Iranian we know : hence the uncertainty of its significance.[92]

No wonder that the hazy incertitude of the meaning has given rise to the theory that Zarathushtra was no historical personage, but purely a mythical figure, possibly an embodiment of the school or sect from which the new religion issued, or a semi-anthropomorphic image of the god Mithra.

Other scholars hold it impossible to set up anything like a biography of the prophet from the narratives bequeathed to us, and would relegate all that the younger *Avesta* and the later Persian writings relate of him to the limbo of myth. They, however, urge that that view does not preclude the possibility that a real prophet bearing the name once lived and taught and laid the foundation of the Mazdayasnian religion. There are, on the other hand, distinguished Orientalists,[93] who, with Martin Haug at their head, consider **Zarathushtra** not merely as a historic personality, but **claim for him,** or failing that for his contemporaries and disciples, **to some extent the composition of the** *Gàthas*.

First of all to investigate this last hypothesis. Let us admit without further ado that **several chants** in the Gathic collection are calculated to appear as the **authentic production of Zarathushtra** himself and his earliest believers. One hymn directly claims him for its author. It is the opening one in the *Gàtha Ushtavaiti* (*Yasna* 43). The minstrel describes how the Deity himself came attended by Vohumano to him and asked, "Who art thou? whose art thou?" Whereupon he immediately answers, 'Zarathushtra,' and expresses his desire "to prove a

[92] Kern regards Zarathushtra as a star-genius or a light-god and analyses the name into Zarathushtra which he translates like Windischmann by "gold-brilliance." Most scholars divide the compound into *Zarath* and *ushtr*, finding "camel" in the second component, which occurs also in names like Avaraoshtra, Frasaoshtra, &c., and the first is reduced to *sarat* or *saradh*, making of the whole "gold camel," or "yellow camel," or "camel-hearted," or "possessing bold camel."

[93] To them belong Bartholomae, Geldner and William Jackson

stern chastiser of transgressors, a friend and a help to the righteous, and to win over the zealous searchers after the kingdom of God by means of unceasing praise and meditation of Mazda." The object of the hymn lies on the face of it, though it contains passages which have so far resisted elucidation. It depicts the call of Zarathushtra to his prophetic mission. He realises the enormous difficulty of his message, but is prepared for its execution. Ahura Mazda will vouchsafe him support, and Aramaiti will instruct him. This entire narrative, therefore, is reported by Zarathushtra himself. But even in the strophes where he is not mentioned—for instance, where he complains of p.rsecution and misunderstanding and is at a loss whither to wend his way—the speaker and the prophet are identical.

Nevertheless it does not follow that he is the actual poet. **There are found arguments warranting suspicion.** It is patent that to the singer of this hymn, Zarathushtra is a sanctified being of bygone ages. We may not believe it, but he declares that he existed from before the creation. At all events the following words are put in his mouth in *strophe* 5 :—

> " Thee I conceive as holy Mazda Ahura,
> Because at the creation of the world I beheld Thee first.
> When Thou didst appoint that deeds and words shall their recompense have.
> For the wicked evil, happy blessings for the good."

Here then he is so far glorified as to have experienced this apocalypse at the first beginning of things. And this idea recurs again. He is named in numerous passages where he can neither be the poet nor his contemporary. A striking instance is the celebrated dialogue with **Geush Urva,** the soul of the Kine, a personification whose significance we shall discuss in the sequel. Geush Urva laments over her sufferings and beseeches Mazda for a guardian. Mazda responds that Zarathushtra is the only protector ordained to be her lord, her **Ratu**, for he knoweth all the divine commandments. In spite of her appeal for a

more puissant care-taker, Geush Urva has to content herself with Zarathushtra.[94]

Fancies of this description do not crop up in the life-time of a person. They are the result rather of his apotheosis decreed by posterity.

In another song along with him we come upon **Vishtasp,** whom tradition makes his patron, Frasaoshtra, whom it makes his father-in-law, who both are already living, if I construe the passage correctly, with Ahura Mazda in heaven, " where Asha is united with Armaiti " (righteousness with true belief), where the sovereignty of the Good Mind prevails, and where Ahura Mazda tenants what we may call his Valhalla (*varedemam*). Vishtasp is counted among the inmates of Mazda's house, and of the **Haechataspa Spitamas,** the house of Zarathushtra, it is claimed that they brought to the believers Asha (righteousness) according to the primordial or aboriginal ordinance of Ahura. It is permissible to expound all this in a metaphorical sense, but taken all in all it produces the impression that the minstrel refers to persons now exalted to divinity whom he pays homage.[95]

Another psalm, which contsitutes a whole *Gâtha,* and perchance is of the oldest, contains several allusions to the Zarathushtrian legends.[96]

It would throw much light on the problem, if it was less mutilated and so more intelligible. Still it is plain that it sets forth that Zarathushtra had " recently " proclaimed a reward for the Magavans in the shape of **Garo-demana** or paradise. One can scarcely refrain from hazarding the conjecture that the Zarathushtra here spoken of is not a person, but rather an ecclesiastical or prophetic office. We may instance the places which deal with the gifts with which Zarathushtra must be propitiated.[97]

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[94] *Yasna* 29, 8, 9.

[95] *Yasna* 46, 13—19.

[96] The *Gâtha, Vohukhshathra, Yasna* 50. (See specially *strophes* 11 and 15).

[97] *Yasna* 46, 13. 49, 12; 50, 6.

Sometimes he obviously discriminates between the holy saints of yore and himself and his own.[98]

One would almost be inclined to discover in three names the ideal representatives of the three states, the priest-seers, the rulers and the men, were it not that we have reasons to look upon the legend of Vishtasp's kingdom as of younger date.

The last is the only *Gâtha*[99] the claim of which to translate us directly to the times of Zarathushtra can be logically sustained.

But unfortunately the greater part of it is in a hopelessly mangled condition [100] and is hard to interpret on this account, as well as because of its many obsolete words. Not more than the opening few strophes yield an easy sense. They display as living besides Zarathushtra, Frashaoshtra and the eldest or the most beautiful of Zarathushtra's daughters,—**Pauruchista Spitami.** The composition is evidently a nuptial song for the prophet's daughter. It treats of her housewife's duties and the bridegroom addresses a few words of monition to the bride.[1] The *Gâtha* is either extremely archaic and hence hard to construe, or very posterior, which should account for its defective formation. I suspect the latter.[2] The way in which the first

[98] *Yasna* 28, 6—8, where Frasaoshtra is emphatically mentioned as "the man."

[99] *Gâtha Vahishtoishti, Yasna* 53.

[100] *Strophe* 2 offers the hardest difficulties, and the most mystifying line runs :—

Kavaêha Vishtaspa Zarathushtrish Spitamo Ferashaoshtraêcha.

Are two persons named here or three? If three, what is Zarathustrish Spitamo? It cannot be Zarathushtra himself, inasmuch as he is already named in the preceding *strophe* and *hoi* here refers to him. It follows, therefore, that two men only are spoken of—note that the *cha* is only once repeated—and that Zarathushtrish goes with Kava Vishtaspa and Spitamo with Frashaoshtra. For the first, see *Yasht*, 13, 98.

[1] [See the beautiful metrical version in Mill's *The Gâthas of Zarathushtra in metre and rhythm* p, 191,—TR.]

[2] Darmesteter sees in the last strophe a germ of the *Ahunavairya* prayer, which if it was correct, would make the song very old. But I would rather assume the reverse—the end of the hymn is a paraphrase of the old prayer.

strophe mentions Zarathushtra does not favor the supposition that here the speaker is a contemporary and shows that he cannot be the bard himself. Most probably it is a marriage song in which holy men of antiquity are held up to imitation.

Hence for a historical construction the texts lend but scanty support. At the same time positive evidence for regarding the whole as mere myth is equally meagre. We encounter names which would be borne by gods and demi-gods. But those of the kinsmen and the first disciples of Zarathushtra are not of this description. They may indicate mythical beings, but men quite as well. Most are compounds ending with *asp* (horse): Haechataspa was the ancestor, Paurushaspa was the father, of Zarathushtra,—the father is not mentioned in the *Gâthas*,—Jamaspa was his trusty friend, Vishtaspa his patron. The names sometimes terminate in *ushtra* (camel), as Frashaoshtra. Pauruchishta, the name of his daughter, may be an ordinary proper name, just as Spitama, the honorific title of Zarathushtra and some of his relations, which was latterly construed as a patronymic. Spitama, or Spitamenes,[3] and Vishtaspa are acknowledged old Persian names. Not the less can they be applied to common persons. Compounds with *asp* present themselves from ancient times in the names of deities, and the name of Vishtaspa's father, Aurataspa is one of the epithets of Apam-napat, the god of "fire which resides in water," the lightning god. Maidyo-maongha, another adherent of the prophet's, is called by a name, which, for a man's, is highly suspicious; assuredly it sounds queer to be called "Middle-of-the moon," or, as I should say, Full-moon. The *pros* and *cons* tolerably hold the balance. But if we are here not on historic ground, we do not also go beyond the bounds of traditions. **Not the faintest trace of a single myth is found in the *Gâthas* which were subsequently current in connection with Zarathushtra.** There is no vestige in the *Gâthas* of his miraculous birth, his temptation, his struggle with the Evil

[3] Spitamenes was leader of Sogdian cavalry under Bessos, *Arrian*, III., 28, 16.

Spirit, his expected apparition at the end of time. The Zarathushtra of the most ancient records is in fact another than the one figuring in the younger works. Here, in general, he is the sublime seer to whom Mazda Ahura imparts his profound wisdom, a sort of Moses, who communes with the Supreme Deity as a man does with his friend. He is the chosen prophet. Occasionally he is raised to a still higher eminence. He is no doubt no god or theomorphic man. He is not installed by the side of Ahura Mazda as the head of the mundane, as Ahura Mazda is of the celestial, economy. If he is appointed **Ratu or spiritual champion** of Geush Urva, that is only a figurative phrase to suggest that his new doctrine is the basis of a more humane social order; though it closely approaches the dogma of his domination of all temporal concerns, for already at the genisis it was he who beheld Mazda and received his revelation. To be brief, his glorification has perceptibly commenced, though it is yet in its undeveloped stage.

The circle of his kindred and staunch followers, so far as the *Gâthas* are concerned, is purely human. Though **Vishtaspa**[*] has become a king for the *Gâtha* poet (and as such he is invariably viewed from here downwards), his realm is ethereal—Maghahya khshatra; whatever its meaning, science or sagacity according to tradition, or the community of the faithful, according to Geldner and Jackson. He is a **Kava**, which is his constant epithet and which primarily signified nothing save sage or seer for a certainty. And as Kava he was also a poet—a fact which is explicitly stated. He belonged indeed to the Magavans, for he is styled the intrepid, and is ever celebrated as the most intimate friend of Zarathushtra and the defender of his following.

[*] Here are the most important passages treating of Vishtaspa mostly along with his other early proselytes: *Yasna* 28, 7; 46, 16; 51, 16. The last is very noteworthy.

Of **the brothers Frashaoshra and De-Jamaspa,** who are called **Hvogvas,**[5] whatever the import of the term, at least the second seems to have been a minstrel also. But as to the enigmatic **Maidhyo-maongha** it is distinctly asserted that he volunteered to receive instruction in the canon of Mazdaism with intent to profess the creed all his life. Despite the circumstance that so early as in the old hymns they show lineaments, which time has somewhat helped fade, I do not see why we should deny them all, excepting perhaps Maidhyo-maongha, historic existence. Whether this is true of Zarathushtra also is another question. Similar suspicions have been entertained about persons of undoubted reality. **The employment of the term Zarathushtra** for priests so frequently in the *Gâthas* and even in the superlative degree, *zarathushtrotemo*, to indicate the arch-hierophant, tends to demonstrate that the expression stands for the personification of a school or denomination of priest-prophets or sages, who in a combined league brought about a social and religious upheaval or a general amelioration. But this inference is not absolutely inevitable. **The possibility remains that a person Zarathushtra by name was the great reformer,** the story of whose life shrouded in a nimbus of legends, evades successful investigation.

[5] Hvogva, later *hvova*, is used as a family name, but may mean "well-situate" or "noble." The daughter of Jamasp is also so surnamed in the *Yashts*. De, as used before Jamasp, is usually explained by "wise." For Maidhyo-maongha, see *Yasna* 51, 19.

CHAPTER X.

THE MINSTREL-PROPHETS.

It cannot be positively determined whether the poets of the *Gâthas* when they speak of the **Saoshyants,** mean themselves by the expression, or whether, as when they introduce Zarathushtra speaking, it is only a peculiar form and the *saoshyants* too were hierophants of former days. The appellation literally conveys the sense of the "useful ones," "those who promote growth and felicity, the redeemers, and here it can be best rendered by "**absolving prophets.**" In the later *Avesta* the term denotes the **saviours to come,** one or more redeemers, who will rise at the termination of the world and bring to pass the renovation of all things. But we do not meet with this expectation in the older texts.[6] There the *saoshyants* are prophets of an anterior age or of the present. Ahura taught them the dogma whose fruit is good actions, whereby they become friends, brothers, fathers, to the lords of houses.[7] Vishtasp and Frashaoshtra pave the way for the doctrine. The *saoshyants* become the fosterers of peace, the saviours of the land, wise of thought and benevolent of purpose, and by the consequence, the most redoubtable adversaries of Aeshma, the great fiend. "How shall I learn," cries out one of the minstrels, "whether Thou

[6] In mentioning the *saoshyants*, only once does the future seem to be spoken of. In *Yasna* 46, 3 it is asked when the "Increasers of the days" (those who grant a long life?) will appear to save the world of Asha, the wise *saoshyants* with their effective doctrines. But in the first place here are meant teaching prophets and not the miraculous beings of the eschatology and, secondly, in the next *strophe* they themselves are called the saviour-prophets. the expectation, therefore, obviously refers to the nearest future.

[7] *Yasna* 45, 11. *Deng-paiti*, which occurs here, can be explained in two ways: either as equal to Sansk. *dampati*, householder, or "wise" or "wise prince." Cannot *deng* be the Gathic form of *danghu*, and consequently the word mean *danghupaiti*, lord of the country? *Danghu* and its derivatives do not occur in the *Gâthâs*. The poets often invoke the protection of princes.

rulest over these two, who menace me with horrors and violence?" and justifies his inquiries by adding. "The *saoshyants* must know what shall prove their happiness," which shows that he counts himself among the redeemers of mankind.[8]

They bear other titles besides this. One calls himself a **zaotar**, of pious rectitude. *Zaotar* is the old Aryan designation for priest, the Sanskrit *hotar*, who afterwards appears as the officiating priest and reciter at the *soma* or *haoma* sacrifice. Another rejoices in the name of **ratu**, known to Ahura Mazda. Perhaps at this period the term connotes, *inter alia*, lord spiritual in general as contra-distinguished from *ahu*, or lord temporal. Subsequently the name came to be appropriated to the second of the officiating priests, the assistant of the *zaotar*. Perhaps it was applied to all the seven, who once assisted him, and whose functions were later transferred to a single individual.[9] Again they assume the title of **mathran**, or inspired oracles, a name which dates from the East Aryan period, though the term analogous to it we encounter, not in the *Vedas*, but in classical Sanskrit. By *mathrans* were meant nothing more or less than the prophets. But Zarathushtra also is so styled, the friend of Mazda. The *mathrans* pray that the Deity may give right direction to their thoughts and words just as He did regarding their predecessor and chief.[10]

Athravan, the familiar appellation of the priest in later times does not appear in the body of the *Gâthas*. But this term which signifies fire-priest, is of universal occurrence in the posterior *Avesta*. Is this also the case with the not less well-known word "**magian**," under which denomination, according to Herodotus, the priests of Persia passed, and whom he characterises as one of the Median clans? It has been

[8] Compare *Yasna* 53, 2; 48, 12 and 9; 34, 13.

[9] The celestial intellects are also called *ratus*, especially in the younger *Avesta*, *Vispe ratavo*, "all lords." *Neriosangh* translates it on a single occasion (*Spiegel*, 42, 6) by *guru*, or spiritual preceptor. *Cf.* the prayer *yath ahu vairya, atha ratush ashatchit hacha*.

[10] *Yasna* 50, 5 and 6. The correct translation of these *strophes* so far as I know, is given by Geldner alone in Kuhn's *Zeitschrift* 1885, 28, p. 259.

attempted to read this name in a couple of sentences in the younger *Avesta*, but the word there used most indisputably expresses a totally different idea.[11] In the *Gâthas*, however, in some places the *magvans* are mentioned in whom Martin Haug saw the magians that were to be, and whom he attempted to bring into *rapport* with *maga*, which is so repeatedly met with. This view is now surrendered by all scholars. Most of the exegetes are with Haug, when he attaches to *maga* the sense of "the great emprise," "the mighty cause," while others are for a "league," "a fraternity of the devout"; but all are agreed that *magvans* mean "magnates, the reputable," or, in the primary import of the word, "the generous" or possibly the "members of the union." On this point the last word is not yet pronounced. It is of superlative interest for the history of the Zarathushtrian religion, and is of equal consequence with respect to the question whether the magians are of foreign extraction and, if so, of Babylonian orgin. Repeated and careful investigation of the problem before us has satisfied me that the hypothesis of the **alien origin of the magi,** which at one time did not strike me as inadmissible, is reared on too unsolid grounds to be any longer upheld. It takes its stand merely on Jeremiah xxxix. 3, which records that Nebuchadnezzar, on his invasion of Judea, was accompanied, among others, by the Rab-Mag, in whom those who adopt the traditional interpretation behold the supreme head of the magi. But in the first place the equivalent for sorcerers and wizards in the Babylonian and the Assyrian is entirely different, and secondly this Rab-Mag is positively ranked among the "princes" or the "grandees" of the king of Babylon by Hebrew writers. Further, we have the old Summerian vocable *mag*, which was assimilated with the Assyrian and is explained by "great," "mighty." "brilliant," "lord," or "prince," but never conveys the meaning of priest or enchanter. These magi have nothing in common with the Medo-Persian magians, nor in all probability with Rab-Mag[12].

[11] See the remarks in my treatise on the age of the *Avesta*.

[12] This hypothesis has been elsewhere exhaustively controverted by me,

Supposing Rab-Mag really was the head of the magians he must have entered Babylon from Media. But that is not likely.

The identity of the *magavans* with the magians is not proved, nor is it established that the word is cognate with *maga*, in respects other than etymological. In both the passages where they are mentioned the most appropriate signification is "mighty," or "able"—those whose support and countenance the evangelists most needed[13]. *Maga* on the contrary appears to be a technical phrase. In ascertaining its meaning, we must bear in mind that it is also employed in an unfavourable sense. A poet who might well stand for Zarathushtra hopes that men may hearken to the preaching of his followers and reject the impurities of the *maga*, through whose inimical potency it is that the **karpans,** or purblind priests of the *daevas*, and through whose science it is that the tyrants of the land, exercise their influence over such a wide circle[14]. As against this we have "the great providing *maga*" and "Vohumano's *maga*," as whose best friend Vishtasp is celebrated and over whom he obtains his sovereignty[15]. Here the notions of both "great work" and a "compact" harmonise with the context, but not the second one there, where it is used in an unfavourable sense.

I fancy **maga is to be construed** rather in the sense of potency or efficiency—a miraculous or supernatural power of the priests, and hence finally as magic itself : a power wielded by the Zarathushtrian *vates* as well as the hierophants of the *daevas* the only difference being that the former practised it for good objects, the latter to encompass nefarious designs. The Medo-

Yasna 33, 7. Though the first line is very difficult, nevertheless the words, *e.g.*, *ya sruye pare magauno*, can hardly mean anything but "so that I may be listened to by the magnates," and in the third line we have what the poet desires of the magnates, namely, that he might perform public sacrifices and prayers. *Yasna* 51, 15 mentions the (heavenly) reward which Zarathushtra had taught or promised to the maghavans.

[14] *Yasna* 48, 10. Is *urupaycinti* derived from *pa* † *uru*? In *Yasna* 53, 7 also the word seems to bear an unfavourable sense but the passage is obscure.

[15] In *Yasna* 46, 14, *mazoi magai* refer to *urvatho*.

Persian *magus* can very well be derived therefrom, but there is no evidence that it was formed at the time of the composition of the *Gâthas*. **Accordingly the magians are entirely absent from the body of the** *Avesta* though perhaps they owe their name to an ancient Avestaic idea.

By whatever title we characterise them, the **minstrel-prophets** possess a lofty conception of their peculiar function, their avocation and the sublimity of their dogmas. Although, unlike the seers of old, whom they remember with reverence, they are not of the number of the founders of the faith, and although they delight in putting those seers before themselves, before even Zarathushtra to whom Mazda has disclosed his lore, it is hard to draw the line between where they address or exhort in their names and where they preach on their own initiative. At least quite as often they lay claim to the distinction of "redeemers of the land." And it is not that they are not conscious of being favoured with special divine communication : they themselves declare the fact with no uncertain voice. To behold the deity with their eyes and to confer with him shall be permitted to them, should they invoke in righteousness the best spirit and ever foster tillage. Mazda and Asha illumine their intelligence through the holy Mind, so that they discern what is right. Their dogma is the dogma of Mazda. The most secret of principles are divulged to them and in their comprehension of things spiritual they are likened to the Godhead[16]. And this communion with Mazda is the intercourse of friend with friend[17]. Like the Rishis of the *Veḍas* they "saw" their songs. "Now will I proclaim," begins one of the poets endowed with prevision, "to those who are approaching intent (on instructions) what great gifts are bestowed on the knowing, the eulogiums and sacrificial psalms of Vohumano (appointed) for Ahura, well-meditated in devoutness (*asha*) and clearly perceived in the

[16] *Yasna* 31, 8 ; 33, 6 ; 48, 3, &c.

[17] The whole of the beautiful song in *Yasna* 44 (*Gâtha Ushlavaiti*), the *strophes* of which begin with the words (*tat thwa peresa eresh moi vaocha ahura*), "This I ask thee, tell me aright, Ahura," is a prayer to God for revelation in questions which bear themselves, so to say, the answers.

heaven."[18] It is admitted, however, that they have woven these hymns to the Ahuras, and have dedicated themselves to the minstrel's art (*men gaire*) and their lives to prophecy agreeably to *asha*. It is at all events manifest that the hymns are pregnant with extraordinary potency. A *manthra*, or maxim of magical efficacy, springing from *asha*, or true piety, opens the way to bliss and athanasia (*haurvatat* and *ameretat*). With the *manthras* the seer proceeds to the Chinvat Bridge which leads to elysium,[19] or brings the celestial intelligences from their abode to the earth to succour the believer. In figurative language, which reminds us of the *Veda*, a bard sings: "Now will I yoke the swiftest steeds of your glorification that are strong by the good Mind to gain the bridge of Heaven, O Mazda and Asha. Be thou be carried by them (mount them) and come to my help."[20]

On the other hand, damnation is the close of life for those who will not conduct themselves according to these teachings. The *manthras* enable those who recite them to control the wicked, the transgressors, and the Lie-demons. The *manthras* slay the Druksh, who deserve death, for assassins are they. The apostles of evil counsel kill by their preachings the reason of life and rob men of the longed-for blessings of Vohumano. Murderers of the revealed wisdom are these tyrants with their sorcery. They corrupt the respected of men by extolling unto them a life of sinfulness. Indeed, the opponents are portrayed in awful colors as the antagonists of the faithful who can advance only the reprobate, waylay the good in forests, menace the God-fearing with the sword, despoil the householders, men and women, of their possessions, and, which is the worst, beguile the pious from the path to Vohumano, the benignant intelligence, the true Order.[21]

And those who dispense these great blessings and avert great calamities in virtue of the power with which God has gifted

[18] *Yasna* 30, 1.
[19] *Yasna* 44, 17.
[20] *Yasna* 50, 7.
[21] *Yasna* 32, 9—11. Comp. 45, 3; 28, 5; 44, 14.

them are entitled to appreciation and assistance. The Creator of the world does not reveal his mystery to man direct, but through the medium of *asha* (which has here the meaning of the cult), so that the remaining classes receive their knowledge through the priests and prophets. However supreme the importance attaching to the duty of a good king to rule with prudence and of a husbandman to till the soil for the maintenance of all, the ecclesiastical life is the best one can assume.[22] And **the priests** therefore have high claims. Those who repudiate these and deny **the eloquent man** (*erezhukhdha*) his due, know full well what penalty awaits them which there is no escaping. One bard goes so far as to specify how much his merits have earned for him—ten pregnant mares and a camel—but he vows to consecrate it all to Mazda.[23] Actual *danastutis*, grateful panygerics for presents received from patrons by the sacerdotal caste, which so frequently are to be met with in the *Vedas*, there are none in the *Gâthas*. However, a few litanies come very near to them. They, that insure felicity for all, themselves merit good fortune. It lies on men in easy circumstances to provide for the well-being of those who disclose to them the true doctrines. Must they not receive the choicest part of the bounties—they who show the right way to salvation in both the worlds, here and hereafter, and the paths that lead to the real world where Ahura dwells?[24]

But this surely is not the prevailing tone of the *Gâthas*. The echoes that we perceive in these scanty remnants of the Zarathushtrian literature, these texts transmitted without care

[22] *Yasna* 46, 9; 48, 5. [Let the good kings obtain the rule. Let not the evil monarchs govern us (but let the righteous gain the day and rule us) with deeds done in a good discernment, O thou pious wisdom, Aramaiti! sanctifying to men's minds the best of blessings for (their) offspring. Yea, for the Kine, let (Thy) toil be given and mayst thou cause her to prosper for our life.—S.B.E. XXXI. p. 155 Tr.] Darmesteter has correctly seen that in the above, three classes of people are spoken of, *viz.*, prince, priest and peasant.

[23] *Yasna* 44, 18 and 19.

[24] *Yasna* 43, 1—3. These *strophes* seem to be only a prelude to the song proper in which Zarathushtra appears speaking and announces the revelation received from Mazda. They seem to have been added later on,

in places wholly unintelligible, are those of a grim struggle, a profound conviction and faith, a real religious enthusiasm, a courageous but not hopeless passion for the creed. In an ecstatic outburst the poet declares:—

"I will predict. Lend me your ears—ye who from near and ye who from far come coveting salvation. Everything must now be pondered over in public. Not a second time shall the prophet of mendacity corrupt the world by the wicked teachings which his false tongue directs . . . . I will proclaim what the all-wise Mazda Ahura has told me in the beginning of the world . . . . of all the best the greatest that which the Holiest has revealed unto me, the Word which is the best for man to hear. He that obeys this my word and attends to it, to him shall come Haurvatat and Ameretat and Mazda Ahura himself with the works of the good Mind."[25]

But the form in which this belief is expressed is Oriental and antique in its essence. It would be without justification to see in the consciously artistic composition of many of the hymns evidences of their late origin. They are obviously the product of a school of priestly minstrels who energetically strive not only for the propagation of their purer faith and their higher culture, but with a naive candour for the interests and the supremacy of their status, and who do not dissociate personal advantage from the triumph of their cause.

[25] *Yasna* 45, 1—6.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MOTHER-COUNTRY OF THE ZARATHUSHTRIAN RELIGION.

The question of **the birth-place of the Zarathushtrian religion** does not coincide with that of the locality in which the books of the *Avesta* were, we do not say, committed to writing, but composed and perhaps for a prolonged space of time continued to be handed down by word of mouth from one generation to another. The books might issue from very varying countries. The most archaic texts, the *Gâthas*, were in all likelihood first chanted in a place where the language of the minstrel was current. But this is just the problem: Where was this language spoken? The several books, as everyone knows, are not of equal antiquity and are written in a double dialect, one more ancient than the other. Of the later body of writings much could very well have been indited in lands where the vernacular was different, but where the employment of the old sacred tongue in which the creed was originally enunciated was considered necessary to the composition of religious scripture. In a few of the youngest portions traces of Persian influence have been actually discovered. Should we even definitely settle the area of the Gâthic dialect, that would not prove that Zarathushtrianism took its rise in that region. It is possible for it to have been promulgated there by the saintly prophets and yet to have its origin in another quarter. The point at issue is: Where are we to look for the nativity of the Zarathushtrian faith?

It is a difficult question to solve. We lack the necessary documents, and the *Gâtha* texts betray not the faintest trace of geographical allusion. All that can be laid down with certainty is that **Persia proper cannot be the original habitat of the**

Mazdayasnian religion. The speech obtaining here is indeed akin to the Avestaic or Baktrian, but is actually different. Therefore all the other provinces of Iran are open to examination. No wonder that in the scarcity and the unreliability of the data the views of the researchers on the point are widely divergent. While one of them believes he can bring forward evidence in support of East Iran, particularly Baktria, another champions Media, and a third points to the North-West, contending that the religion spread from the South-West of the Caspian Sea, from Atropatene, that was to be, and extended over the rest of Iran.

It is not possible here to recapitulate all the arguments even in their main outlines. They are co-related with the hypothesis respecting the age of the *Avesta*, though not so that they stand or fall together. We cannot more than stop a moment to glance at a few.

Those who are for the East Iranian theory find eminent support in the first *fargard* or chapter of the *Vendidad*, of which we have already spoken before. But waiving the surmise, which it involves, that the author of the chapter drew upon an earlier document of an exclusively geographical nature, granting for the moment that all the countries catalogued in the *fargard* are comprised in East Iran, supposing also that all the names of places occurring in the *Avesta* refer to East Iran (which is far from established),—still it would not follow that the new faith originated in East Iran. It may there have attained to its earliest growth and may have seen the light elsewhere. If we take into consideration that the *Vendidad* ranks but with the younger components of the body of the *Avesta* literature; that the writer of its opening chapter, in its present condition, had in view not a description of the mother-country of his religion, or the history of its dissemination, but simply a survey of the Mazdayasnian world of his day and that before all it was his object to recount the injuries which the counter-creations of the evil one had inflicted; further, that to him **Airyana-vaejo**, the primeval abode of the Aryans, belonged to the region of legends;

and lastly, that the existence of other countries was not unknown to him,—then we shall no longer jump to the conclusion that the Zarathushtrian reformation was consummated in East Iran.

Much less has to be set forth in favor of the Great Media or Media proper hypothesis. It states that the reform movement appeared after the *latria* of Mazda had pre-existed, though in a different guise; that it was a natural religion gradually developed from the old Aryan faith and had long been diffused over all the countries comprised in Iran. The reformers of this ancient Mazdaism must then have been the Magians about the time of Darius Hystaspes. Faithful to the religion of his ancestors he would have nothing to do with the protestants, and, having slain the pseudo-Bardiya, Gaumata the Magian of Media, he persecuted his comrades, and, according to his own testimony, abolished the innovations which the *magush* had introduced into the cult during his reign. The complaints so loudly uttered in the *Gâthas* refer to his sacrilege.

Now this assumption is a tissue of improbabllities. The whole *Avesta* militates against it. Is it conceivable that the Magians have been the founders of the religion of Zarathushtra, the Magians who are not once mentioned in all the sacred scripture from its oldest to its latest component? Is it conceivable that Media was the birth-place of the reform, and yet neither this country, nor its capital of Ekbatana, famed from time immemorial, should chance to be mentioned? With the solitary exception of Ragha, the seat of the priesthood situtate on the farthest confines of Media, what we come upon are almost exclusively cities and principalities of East and North Iran. Supposing Darius's treatment of the Magians can be labelled persecution, that persecution partook more of the nature of politics than of religion, except, perhaps, for the fact that the king restored the ancestral sanctuaries of the Persians, which the Magians, possibly in a puritanical zealotry for the Mazdayasnian faith, appear to have closed. Darius was, according to the evidence of his own inscriptions, a Mazda-worshipper, and a

Mazda-worshipper is a Zarathushtrian, though not necessarily always of rigid orthodoxy. Mazda may have occupied the place of a nature-god, say like Varuna, or may have supplanted the latter, but *as* Mazdâ he has never been a nature-god, but belongs exclusively to the Zarathushtrian system. On all these grounds this hypothesis, so elaborately advanced by its latest advocate Dillon, must be rejected. The names of two Median kings long before Darius, and of a Persian prince of the 7th century B.C., justify the inference that these were already pious Zarathushtrians, and that there is every reason to believe that the Aryan language of Media was not essentially desparate from the Old Persian. We do not comment on the impossibility of a reform in the times of Darius Hystaspes having for its object the replacement of nomadic existence by a life of settled avocations.

Nothing remains, then, but to look for **the cradle of the Zarathushtrian innovations in the north or north-west of Iran,** from whence it probably spread first to the east and south-east of Baktria as far as India, then to the south down to Media proper and Persia. It is difficult to speak with greater precision. **Airyanem-vaejo, the "cradle of the Aryans,"** could be regarded as the parent land of the Aryans, because it is mentioned the first among the countries created by Mazda in *Vendidad*, 1. It was a very real land, though the memory of it was so blurred that legends and myths had made it their own. It had come to be confounded with the mythical locality of the Paradise Lost, where met together Ahuramazda and the *yazatas* with Yima, the first king of mankind, and where Zarathushtra conversed with the Godhead. It is characterised as **the country of the good daitya** (*Vanghuyao daityao*), wherein the younger *Avesta* sees a river, in which the evil-spirit created a formidable hydra. *Daitya*, however, can scarcely connote anything save either "institution," "law" or "creation"; and we must recognise that the "good law" or "the good creation" is a strange name to bestow upon a river. Probably it indicates the old order of the world established by Mazda, the law of the pre-Zarathushtrian believers, which Zarathushtra came to revive.

The actual parentland of the Aryans, not the one confused with the paradise, **is identified, with reason, with Atropatene (Atropatkan, Azerbaijan)** on the south-west coast of the Caspian. This district is looked upon with considerable sanctity, its name denoting the "descent of fire." According to one tradition Zarathushtra was born there. And it was from here that issued the renaissance of the Mazdayasnian religion under the Parthian monarchy. It is not improbable, therefore, that the Zarathushtrian faith arose there.

Much less probable is the tradition that **Ragha** in the north-east of Media was the birthplace of the Prophet, or, in other words, of the Mazda-worship. Ragha was a city of the priesthood and that of great antiquity. In the Sasanide times the supreme Magi resided there, and long before this, when the *Vendidad* was written, it was governed by a high priest, the Zarathushtra or the **Zarathushtrotemo,** with no secular prince over him ; from which we can without difficulty explain the tradition which makes it Zarathushtra's birth-place. But the principal seat of the sacerdotal community of a religion is not *ipso facto* the spot where it first saw the light. Such is seldom the case. And in the enumeration of the lands created by Mazda, Ragha is mentioned in the first *fargard* of the *Vendidad*, neither in the first place nor next after the Aryan stem-land, but in the middle of others.

CHAPTER XII.

WAS THE REFORMATION INFLUENCED BY SEMITISM?

The theory has often been advanced that the **Zarathushtrian reformation** has not sprung from a purely Aryan origin, but that it exhibits obvious indications of a **Semitic influence.** This is not impossible. **Assyrians.** and, prior to them, even Babylonian kings, according to their annals and the accounts of their wars, not only repeatedly extended their conquering expeditions into the depths of Media, but founded colonies there before the Aryans had gained the upperhand, or even perhaps made a settlement a long while previous to their domination of the country. Occasionally we find Assyrian sovereigns as overlords of undoubtedly Aryan princes of Media or Persia or as arbiters between the latter. The description given by Herodotus (1, 98) of the citadel of Ecbatana, the Median metropolis, reminds us of the Zakurats, the terrace temples of the Babylonians and the Assyrians. At any rate, the Babylon-Assyrian empire was the immediate neighbour, whose advanced culture must of itself have impressed the gifted young and undeveloped Aryan community, who stood below them in knowledge, arts and refinements of life. When the most powerful empire on the Euphrates and the Tigris finally fell to ruins, the martial Aryans became the masters of all Assyria as far as the Halys and eventually of Babel. In many respects they now became the pupils of their subjects. The Persian architecture and sculpture, the Persian cuneiform script, and the later Persian alphabet are all imitations perhaps of Elamite, but undoubtedly of Assyrian and Aramaic prototypes, although the Aryan genius does not belie itself in its methods of assimilation and simplification. Over the head of the sacrificing kings on the reliefs we notice a

winged figure hovering, which marks the supreme Deity of Assur. Borrowed by the Assyrians from the Egyptians, it is taken over by the Persians, not direct from the latter but from the former, and adapted to serve as a symbolic representation of Ahura Mazda or his Fravashi. And may not the religious ideas themselves have been touched by this Semitic influence? It was well known to the Greeks that the Persians were highly susceptible to what was foreign and were ever prone to adopt it.

However plausible this may appear by itself, still no scholar has succeeded in proving to demonstration that Semitic conceptions have actually co-operated in the production of the Zarathushtrian religion.[26]

Stray words and the objects they connoted may have been received from the Semites, and others originally Iranic may have had their significance modified owing to their intercourse with them, but such instances of concord are scant, in part extremely dubious, and on the whole they date from no high antiquity. With regard to what the Achæmenides borrowed from the Semitic races or to what they adopted in imitation of them, for instance the symbol for **Ahura Mazda** and subsequently under Artaxerxes II, the goddess, who was called **Anahita** by the Persians, the simple answer is that it has nothing to do either with the genesis or the evolution of the *latria* of Mazda, which at the period in question had long since been consolidated and was in fact on the decline. Much emphasis is laid on the circunstance that Mazda is called **the creator** of heaven and earth, men and beasts, and everything besides. This, it is contended, is no Aryan conception, and must, by consequence, have been derived from the Semites; and the more so because both Jew and Persian express the notion by words

[26] The great advocate of the hypothesis that a tangible portion of the doctrine of the *Avesta* must be Semitic, is F. von Spiegel, who has repeatedly defended it. See especially his essays "Der einfluss des Semitismus auf das Avesta" and "Zur Geschichte des Dualism" in his *Arische Studien*, 1 p. 46 *seq.* and 62 *seq.* My criticism has reference to these treatises.

which primarily mean to "cut." Thus it is argued, the Babylonian creator Marduk cuts in twain Tiamat, the cosmic Titan, as does also Bel, in Berossos, his own head. It is all pure fantasy. The words which the Jew, the Persian and likewise the Vedic Indian employ to denote creation all signify cutting, but in the sense of "forming," "making," "carpentering," "building."[97] That this idea is Semitic, and *ergo* non-Aryan, is one of the scientific dogmas which pass current, and yet it cannot bear the test of close scrutiny. That one or more exalted beings have created, that is, made, shaped, or constructed the world, is neither a Semitic nor an Aryan view, but one which is universally human and which we encounter among every people. The idea that the world has "become," in materialistic or pantheistic sense, is the outcome of later speculation.

Not more tenable is the theory that the **dualism** which stands out so prominently in the Zarathushtrian system must be a loan from the Semites equally with the cognate doctrine of resurrection and retribution.[98] The fact is quite the reverse. True, we

[97] The Hebrew *bara* is compared with the *Avesta* expressions for creation,—*thwaresh*, *taksh*, and *twaksh*—but it is omitted to be remembered that the *Veda*, too, uses words of like import. Compare *Rig-Veda* 11, 12 and X, 21, and *Atharva-Veda*, IV, 2; also see Oldenberg, *Die Hymnen des Rig-Veda* 1, p. 314 *seq*. Consider at the same time the old god Twashtr and the younger Vishvakarman, the arch-maker of all. My colleague, Dr. W. H. Koster has had the kindness to have all the passages in the Old Testament examined where the word *bara* occurs. With three exceptions, they are all exilic or post-exilic, and evidently nowhere is the sense of "cutting" intended and even in the oldest places it indicates nothing but "to make" with reference to things as well as men. It was not till later times that the term was applied to the creation of heaven and earth.

[98] Spiegel goes so far as to assert that the Persian dualism, because unknown to Herodotus and Xenophon and not mentioned in the inscriptions of the Achæmenides, must be of younger origin; although he concedes that it is taught in the oldest *Avesta* documents and was known to the Greeks since the 4th century B.C. As for Xenophon, his romance is no authority, and as to Herodotus from 1, 140 it is evident he understood something of the Persian dualism. The Achæmenides write no dogmatics and they mention evil genii, and, above all, denounce the spirit of Lie with the same emphasis as the *Avesta*. Add to it all that the most ancient texts of the *Avesta* could not have been written subsequent to the 5th century B.C., as has been shown above.

meet with these conceptions in the Semites, but among them they are not genuinely indigenous. For with them the sovereignty is the fundamental and all-pervading religious principle out of which issue, as a mature fact, their rigid monotheism,—a monotheism less philosophic than religious. Dualistic beliefs are by no means uncommon in all ancient religious systems. They are an outcome of the most primeval myths about light and darkness, the wars between the beneficent and the demoniac agencies of the heavens. And the dualism found among the Iranians is in the same way traceable to the same sources. Its bald outline among them, and more especially in Zarathushtrianism, can be explained on historical grounds,—mainly from their relation as the ruling, though perhaps numerically weaker, nation to the earlier inhabitants of the land and from their relation as a small body of believers to the devotees of the *daevas*.

Recently one step still further has been taken. It is alleged that so far back as prior to the reform of Zarathushtra, before the separation of the Iranians and Indians in the East Aryan age, Semitic influences were already at work. To them the number "**seven**" of the highest beings of the Vedic Adityas, as well as of the Zarathushtrian Amesha Spentas, owes its abstract and ethical, and therefore non-Aryan, trait of origin. Accordingly, the Semitic features which we come upon in Zarathushtrianism need not be ascribed to direct contact. They were already existing in the popular religion from which Zarathushtrianism took its rise. Now this hypothesis, unnecessary to account for the facts, appears to me in the last degree improbable. Historically, such a commerce between the still united Indo and Perso Aryan and the Semitic tribes who had ascen ded to a comparatively superior ethico-religious level, is scarcely imaginable. This much is possible: the number "seven" was borrowed, for it does play an important role not only in the theology but also in the philosophy of the Iranians and the Indians. All the same, it is not of Semitic origin. It belongs rather to the ancient aborigines of West and Central Asia, on whose civilization the Semites grafted their own. And the Iranians had no need to borrow it,

inasmuch as they found it—witness the citadel of Ekbatana—among the older inhabitants of their own land. The occurrence in Zarathushtra's system of a few very un-Aryan usages, such as the practice of neither cremating nor interring the corpses, but of surrendering them to birds or dogs, has to be attributed more to their influence than to the Semites. And perhaps the preponderance of the magical in the cult of the Mazdayasnian is to be laid to the same account.

I will not deny the possibility, nay the comparative probability, of **the Iranian faith being affected by the Semitic.** There are indeed individual features other than the aforesaid which point that way. To give an illustration, the names or epithet of the Amesha Spentas, but pre-eminently of Ahura Mazda in the *Ormazda Yasht*, which are eulogised as the most potent the most sovereign and the most lethal incantations against Satan, sound in reality more Semitic than Aryan. But the *Yasht*, is of a much later date. If the reformers took a loan from the Semites, these Semites must be verily the Babylonians, and Assyrians. And though there is no absolute lack of congruity between the religious systems of both the nations, we should not overlook the immense and radical differences. In both, the good and the evil spirits are antagonistically opposed to each other, and as the Zarathushtrian, so also the Babylonian, strives to avert and repel the evil by spells of mysterious virtue and by magical manipulations. Nevertheless the Babylonian reveres the malefacent genii, and respects and treats them at least as divinities; while it is totally otherwise with the Zarathushtrians. With them, Ahura Mazda resides high in the heaven, and **Angro Mainyu** in the dismal depths of the infernal regions. Among the Babylonians **Anu** and **Bel** are pitted each against the other. But it is from Anu that issue the seven most pernicious existences, and Bel but executes, when he approaches with his chastisements, the sentence pronounced by Anu, receiving the supreme homage due to the godhead. The good wise god **Ea**, ever ready to absolve, who most resembles Ahura Mazda, tenants the depths of the ocean.

It is therefore preferable, so long as no solid historical proof is forthcoming, to regard Zarathushtrianism as a national movement, whatever causes may have called it into being in one of the clans of the Iranian peoples.

CHAPTER XIII.

MAZDA AHURA.

Hymns like the **Gathas** furnish no theological system, sharply-defined conception of the Deity. This they have in common with all the religious writings of antiquity. Even in the *Veda* we look for it in vain. The *Upanishads* in which we find the first impetus to speculation about the origin of things are the termination of the *Vedas*, and are called *Vedanta*. However, the idea which the prophets of the *Avesta* give of the highest of their deities in their sermons, is expressed with sufficient plainness, and, what is of greater importance, are uniformly and essentially the same in all their poetry.

This most exalted and, properly speaking, **the only God is called Mazda Ahura.** That the authors of the songs were fully cognisant of the significance of this name follows from the manner and way in which, as we saw above, they use this designation; for they put sometimes Mazda, sometimes Ahura, foremost, while occasionally they content themselves with the mention of only one term. They knew perfectly well that they were employing not a single proper name, but a two-fold epithet, which was meant to express the highest characteristic of their conception of God. "Thou who art named by the name Mazda Ahura," addresses him one of these psalms.[29] **Mazda means much-knowing or all-wise,** a God that can be conceived of only in a school of theologians. Mazda Ahura has never been a nature-god. It is possible that a nature-god can be celebrated and glorified on account of his wisdom and science. Thus Ea, the old Chaldean divinity, is styled "Lord of Wisdom." But there it is a title or epithet, not a personal or

[29] *Yasna* 45, 10, *ye anmene mazdao sravo ahura.*

proper name. Now, whether or no the etymological significance of Ahura, be the "being," the "living" (cognate with the Indian Asura, which may be rendered by "spirit"), we have here no warrant for taking into consideration any sense but that of the "Lord." For it is in this sense that the word is used in the whole of the *Avesta*, in the *Gâthas* it being applied not to the denizens of heaven alone but also to mankind. It is only in one passage where Mazda is described as the being most worthy of worship, as the father of Vohumano, and the creator of Asha, that we may surmise an allusion to the original import of the term.[30] Lord, however, he remains in the widest meaning of the word, without doubt. He is omnipotent over all, rules according to his own pleasure, and after the resurrection and the renovation of the creation will dominate the pious, and now controls not only these but exercises his authority over the wicked, over all who fill his followers with terror and threaten with perdition.[31] Every page of the *Gâthas* testifies to his superiority to all that is created.

This Mazda, who remains unaltered in nature and character to this day, is the creator of all things, terrestrial and celestial, spiritual and material.[32] The verses which sing these facts are instinct with poetry. Here is a classical hymn :—[33]

This I ask Thee; aright Ahura tell me;
Who ever earth and sky from falling guardeth?
Who hath save Thee brought forth rivers and forests?
Who with the winds hath yoked racers to storm-clouds?
Who of the good man's grace ever was source?

[30] *Yasna* 31, 8, *Angheush ahurem shyaothaneshu*. "Anghu" is properly "what exists" and so connotes "life," as well as the "world."

[31] *Vase khshayas, Yasna* 43, 1 ; 30, 8 ; 48, 9.

[32] *Yasna* 31, 7.

[33] [I take the liberty of reproducing Mill's almost Miltonic version, rather than the learned author's rigidly scientific translation. What the former has not attempted in precision it has achieved in the spirit, which perhaps makes a nearer approach to the Gathic original — TR.]

This I ask Thee; aright Ahura tell me;
Who with skilled hand the light made, who the darkness?
Who with wise deed hath giv'n sleep or waking?
Who hath Auroras spread, noontides and midnights?
Warning discerning man, duty's true guide.

Thus ask I Thee; aright Ahura tell me:
Who in production first was Asha's father?
Who suns and stars save Thee their path hath given?
Who thins the waning moon, or waxing filleth?
This and still other works, Lord, would I know.

This I ask Thee; aright Ahura tell me;
Are these in very deed truths which I utter?
Doth zeal in our actions further Thy statutes?
To Thine through Thy Good Mind the Realm didst Thou offer?
Who didst Thou make the Kine mother to glad?

Thus ask I Thee; aright Ahura tell me;
Who in thy kingdom has set blest Devotion?
Who, wise, hath made son dutiful to the father?
With this, for full knowledge, Mazda, I press Thee;
Giver of all Thou art, Spirit kind.

This ask I Thee; aright Ahura tell me;
What is Thy doctrine's word to teach and ponder?
That I may ask Thine hymns filled with Thy Good Mind.
Those which through Truth reveal our tribes' perfection;
How can my soul advance? Let it thus be.[34]

It is evident from the above that it is not the material world only which owes its existence to Mazda, and this is inculcated with greater emphasis in many another verse. He is the prime inaugurator and father of the ethical order of creation, the creator of Vohumano, the fashioner of the lovely Armaiti and Khshthra. The whole world glorifies its maker.[35]

[34] *Yasna* 44, 3–7. The form in which this doctrine is announced, that of rhetorical questions, is not unusual also in the *Veda*. See *Yasna* 31, 11.

[35] *Yasna* 31, 9; 45, 4; 48, 6; 51, 7.

Deeds that I do, O Lord,
and deeds
still further ;
And what to
believing eye
shone bright of yore,
stars, suns, auroras
too,
each day's light-bearers
In praise of you
are all
through Asha's lore.[36]

We often come upon in the *Gâthas* and also in the younger *Avesta*, a creature which must detain us here a moment—**Geush Tashan.** This originator of cattle, as it may literally be called, is mentioned generally together with **Geush Urva**, the soul of cattle and also with **Geush Azyao**, the soul of the mother-kine The second hymn of the first *Gâtha* contains a colloquy between Geush Urva and the divine powers, among them Geush Tashan. The former complains that she has been exposed to the attacks of Aeshma and Rema, and that she finds no protector, except the two divine spirits to whom she adheres, but whom she does not mention by name. To all appearance, they are Mazda and Asha. Geush Tashan asks Asha what arrangement she has made with regard to the cattle, inasmuch as the latter have a right to masters who zealously take care of and cherish them, to guardians who should defend them from the violence of miscreants. Asha acknowledges that the cattle have as yet no such keeper, but that he himself will lend his assistance, though the ultimate event must rest with Mazda. Again, Mazda admits that though the cattle are created for the herdsman and peasants, no pious faithful master was appointed over them, and adds that now Zarathushtra will appear to proclaim the Law of Mazda and Asha, and that he will in virtue of it constitute him-

[36] *Yasna* 50, 10.

self the guardian power of the cattle. Now Geush Urva indeed complains that she would much rather have a man of puissance, a sovereign for her care-taker. She, however, has to rest content with Zarathushtra. We have here an example, and the oldest one in the *Avesta*, of how the **Zarathushtrian reformers and their later followers drew upon popular belief for the propagation of their peculiar doctrine.** Here have we a piece of the ancient mythology transformed into a Zarathushtrian homily. The myth is well known. Two protoplasms were first created : one of cattle, and the other of a creature in human shape. Both were killed in the subsequent Zarathushtrian system, as may be excepted, by Angra Mainyush, but originally by the creator, or rather by a creator. Then sprang human beings from the last-named protoplasm, the first of them being **Gayomaratan or life-mortal.** From the steer that was slain arose a number of edible plants and medicinal herbs, and from its semen, which was purified in the moon, the whole animal world, the first of them being a pair of cattle. The **Urva or the soul** of the slaughtered kine went like the souls of all the dead to heaven. This much served the poet to represent the new prophet as the protector of agriculturists and cattle-breeders, and to recommend him as against the wandering nomadic tribes.

Of those who take part in the colloquy is **Geush Tahan, the fashioner of the kine.** He is not identical with Ahura Mazda, because the all-wise Lord can scarcely learn from Asha what measures were contemplated for the safety of the kine. Asha, though differentiated from Mazda, co-operated with him, so far as wisdom and order are concerned. Again, Geush Tashan is here, as well as in other passages of the *Gâthas*, very distinctly distinguished from Mazda.[37] He belongs to the primeval folk-lore, where he figured as a creator or rather a fashioner, and in the Zarathushtrian system he is converted into a subordinate genius who engenders from the kine that was first created, plants, vegetables, and beasts. Originally he was the creator absolute,

[37] *Yasna* 31, 9, where Tasha is in the nominative, Mazda in the vocative and where Ahura has wrongly been taken to mean an earthly ruler.

who killed the cosmic steer and thereby called to life or existence the phenomenal world. (Compare how **Maruduk** created the world by cutting in twain the cosmic Titan called Tiamat.) According to another Old Aryan myth, the creation emanated from a being which had a human form. Comparing Gayomaratan in the *Avesta* with the Purusha of the *Veda*, we learn that this creation-myth was formerly confined in the East Aryan period to the explanation of the origin of man. But as both of them were assimilated to the Zarathushtrian system, the one about the kine was limited in its scope to the production of cattle, and thus Geush Tashan became the source of only a part of things. Who he was in the Old Aryan mythology we have no doubts. He was none other than **Mithra**. One needs but to look at the monuments of Mithra, in which the triumphant god of light thrusts his dagger into the throat of the steer, in order to recognise in him a pendant to the Babylonian Bel Marduk and the prototype of the Geush Tashan of the *Avesta*. And let it be observed that *tash* originally means to cut.

We have to discriminate between the created steer and **the cow**, which brings good fortune and diffuses blessings (*ranyoskereti*). A careful investigation of all the passages of the *Gâthas*, where it occurs, demonstrates that it is not a kind of the type of cattle but rather a mythical symbolisation of the whole material world, and, as a rule, the earth.[38]

But to return to **Mazda Ahura the creator.** It is he to whom men look up—to him the author of all—for bounteous blessings in this life and in the existence the other side of the grave,—"in the two worlds" or "in the two lives" as the common formula runs. Man here is convinced as in all antiquity that the righteous merit reward. Good fortune is the reward for the faithful fulfilment of duty towards the deity, a reward to

[38] A striking instance is furnished by *Yasna* 44, 20, where we are told that the heathen priests and minstrels (the *karpans* and *usij*) surrendered the kine (*gam*) to Aeshma by *inter alia* not watering it and thus omitting to prepare it for the husbandman. The watering of cattle would indeed be a strange preparation for agriculture, nor is it usually a cow that is employed for the purpose.

which he who does not cease to sing his praises has the prime claim. And all the celestial gifts and endowments are generally comprehended in "vigour and endurance" for this world and *haurvatat* and *ameretat*—or eternal "salvation and immortality" for the next.[39] On a single occasion a poet rises to higher level, singing that Mazda dispenses weal and woe as seems to him right.[40] Another bard assures us that God has in his hands blessings for the evil-doer and the devout, which are bestowed upon them through the medium of the sacrosanct fire.[41]

Mazda is accordingly often styled **Spenta Mainyush or Spentotema,** which is generally translated by the "holy spirit" and the "most holy spirit," though properly speaking, the words indicate "salvation-giving" and the "most beneficent." We shall examine later on how far this is related to the dualism and to what extent an adverse spirit is opposed to this benevolent deity. The same epithet of honour—beneficent—is bestowed upon heavenly beings, chiefly Armaiti. So far as I can judge, sanctity, in the Mosaic or the Christian sense of the term, is an idea foreign to the *Gâthas*, though the concept of holiness underlies the personified abstractions of Asha and Vohumano.[42]

If Ahura Mazda is, as his common name connotes, the all-wise and the omniscient, he is likewise expressly denominated **the all-seeing** (*vispa hishas*) who cannot be imposed upon, the watch-keeper (*hara*) whose eyes observe not only what is planned openly but what is designed in secret, the arbiter (*vihira ahura*) or judge who knows all that men and the *daevas* have done or will do.[43] And it is of a piece with this omniscient conception of the deity that the commerce between the believers and their God should be a perpetual form of interrogation—

[39] *Yasna* 34, 13, 50, 1, 7.

[40] *Yasna* 45, 9. [Mills renders the verse differently, gives in a footnote the alternative translation, "who has created weal and sorrow for us with good intention," but regards the latter as hardly probable, because "Ahura did not originate evil."—S. B. E. XXXI. p. 128.—Tr.]

[41] *Yasna* 43, 4.

[42] *Yasna* 45, 4; 51, 7; 43.

[43] *Yasna* 43, 6; 45, 4; 29, 4.

"This I ask of Thee, tell me aright O Ahura."[44] Man ever seeks to learn from him not *ars vivendi* alone, but guidance and direction, in electing what is best and knowledge of the origin of creation. At times when the response seems to be delayed, the faithful in despair longs for a token that Ahura Mâzda, Asha, and Vohumano exist so that he might approach and sing hymns to them. And not the sage alone, but the pastor also directs his enquiry to him who "ruling over his creatures in justice in consonance with decrees of law" prescribes the moral constitution of the world.[45]

Sometimes Mazda Ahura is addressed in the plural and in two places Mazd*as* Ahur*as* are spoken of.[46] The recently proposed tanslation "**Mazda and the Gods**" may be philologically incontrovertible, but it conflicts with the meaning of Ahura and runs counter to the spirit of the Zarathushtrian doctrine. For properly speaking, it knows no gods. In the inscription of the Persian kings local gods are mentioned along with Ahura Mazda, to whom the people and the royal house adhered. This does not seem to have been regarded without resentment by strict Mazdayasnians and to have been reluctantly tolerated by the spiritual authorities. The priests and theologians indeed recognised Yazatas, "adored and adorable beings," but they would have none of the gods proper. Those were idols, *daevas*. I am therefore of opinion that here we have a collective noun like the Hebrew Elohim, or the modern Persian *yazdan*. In Mazda are comprehended all the Ahuras, a whole class of gods from the East Aryan period, probably from a still anterior epoch ; all that is godly is united in him. Hence probably the plural which occurs only in one *Gâtha* and was obviously not generally used.[47]

[44] *Yasna* 44; 31; 14-21.

[45] *Yasna* 28, 11 ; 30, 11; 31, 3; 34, 6, &c.

[46] *Yasna* 29, 1; 28, 2 ; 30, 4 and 9.

[47] In all there are four passages in the *Ahunavaiti* hymns. Mazda and the other Amesha Spentas cannot be meant for in all the passages. One or other of them is separately cited by name, as *Yasna* 28, 2.

However pure and in many a respect lofty this conception of God on part of the old Zarathushtrian prophets may be, still even for those ancient times it is neither unthinkable nor unique. Compare what is here said of Mazda Ahura with what is said in the *Veda* of Varuna, the Asura, and the resemblance is perceptible and the difference negligible. The difference lies in this that, whereas Varuna is the supreme deity of a still strongly polytheistic religion, the principle figure in a rich system of mythology, the **Mazda Ahura,** of the Zarathushtrian is, if not in the strictest sense, **an only God** the only one among all the celestial beings who can truly be called God, and one that is exalted high above his satellites and servants. Besides, Varuna has a rival in the cult; Mazda Ahura, properly speaking, has none, though others also are invoked along with him. No Indra disputed with him precedence in his own council. Reference indeed is made in an anthropomorphic sense to his body, his hand, his mouth, his tongue, his eyes, but not otherwise than what the prophets and poets of Israel are wont to do in respect of Jahve. And when Asha, Aramaiti and Vohumano, and, above all, Atar or fire are called his sons and daughters, let it be remembered that the first three are in fact personified abstract concepts and the fire a spirit, so that it is more symbolisation than mythology, and that it in no manner exceeds what the eighth Proverb expresses about wisdom and what Job i. says about the sons of God. But even in Varuna not much of the mythical is left behind, and he is hardly a less ethical conception of God than Mazda Ahura, omniscient and all-seeing like the latter, severe in chastisement, and a formidable protector of justice and veracity. **Those who were familiar with a personified idea of God in Varuna had but to prolong the line a little to arrive at the presentment of Mazda.** But at all events this was somewhat modified very early in Iran, in fact as soon as the creed, with its spread over larger area, lost much of its purity and nobleness, represented by the singers of the odes. Nevertheless, Mazda Ahura remained the great God, the only God proper.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DUTIES OF THE FAITHFUL.

A complete system of religious ethics is as difficult to deduce from the scanty remnants of the most archaic hymns of Zarathushtra as a complete code of the religious doctrines themselves. The salient thoughts, however, which regulated the moral life of the devout Mazdayasnians, and which are more fully dilated upon in the younger *Avesta* find expression in the *Gâthas*. The dominant note is struck by the triad that it is not enough to practise good in acts and to combat the evil, but that we should equally consider sentiments and words. This injunction is enjoined in a variety of ways in the *Gâthas*. In lieu of sentiments, we have **wisdom**, and the latter is further subdivided into will, inclination, choice or belief; [48] but the later formula "**in thoughts, words, and deeds**" is also employed.[49] And the thoughts or the mind was subordinated to the guidance of Mazda, the omniscient, the deeds to that of Asha, the genius of righteousness, order and the cult, and the words to that of Sraosha, the heavenly listener and speaker.

But, however great the value attached to words, the prophets before all laid stress on **deeds**, in that the mind reveals itself in them much more manifestly than in speech. Action stands at the head of everything Zarathushtrian. Man must seek his livelihood in his personal merits. He that soweth not the soil diligently, nor extendeth Mazda's domain by promoting the settled mode of life, is not his true worshipper. The doctrine of

[48] *Yasna* 48, 4, *ahya zaoshang ushtish varneng*; *yasna* 51, 21, *chisti* instead of *manangha*; *yasna* 33, 14 and 52, 2, *manangha ukadhaish shyaotha naishcha*.

[49] *Yasna* 31, 15; 51, 5. Here the agriculturist (*vastryo*) by "just deeds," possessing a good understanding for prayer, and having *hukhratush nemangha*, is a sort of a type of the pious.

absolving prophets rests in a certain sense on a philosophical basis. But the prophets do not demand that man should give up the work-a-day existence for solitude and retired meditation, or that man should renounce the world with its joys and obligations. **All asceticism is foreign to the Mazda creed.** In a reform, which was of a social as well as religious nature, and which so intimately united moral piety with the cultivation of the soil, nothing else in truth could be expected.

This appreciation of energetic activity did not exclude sympathy for the indigent. The pious insignificant individual is more honoured that the opulent miscreant of importance, for it is incumbent on the faithful not only to devote himself to Mazda and to abjure the *dævas* and the human *khrafshtras*, but in his integrity and benevolence to maintain the "Mazda's poor." [50] I cannot but suggest that by these "poor of Mazda" is implied not what Louis the Saint called *le menu peuple de nostre Seigneur*, but rather in the first instance the minstrels, preachers and priests, who must support themselves on the largesses of the faithful, chiefly royalties and magnates.

Had the stanzas, which deal with the nuptials of Pauruchishti, the prophet's daughter, not been so corrupt, and therefore hard to elucidate, we should be able to affirm with greater certainty what the Zarathushtrian reformers thought of conjugal alliance. What admits of no contradiction is that, in their view, **religion must consecrate marriage**, that the wife should respect the husband as one pure person does another, that she is bound to lay to heart the evangel of the prophets, and thereby to seek to study "the life of Vohumano." "Love each other in Asha, in righteousness and devotion, which will make your home happy," is the admonition to the bridegroom.[51]

In vain we look into the *Gâthas* for the *khvætvadâta*, the principle of the next of kin marriages, as being the one invested with the greatest sanctity. The saints of the past, Zarathushtra, Frashaoshtra, De Jamaspa, married into families other than their

[50] *Yasna* 47, 4 ; 34, 5.

[51] *Yasna* 53, 3-5.

own. Consanguineous *connubium* is neither Zarathushtrian nor Aryan. It must have been a local usage, which in time crept into the Mazdian faith ; or, if that is not so, a measure invented with a view to conserve the purity of blood of a small Aryan minority, or a few noble *clans*.

Love of one's enemy and forbearance were not included in the category of virtues which the apostle of Mazda's persuasion preached to his audience. On the contrary, to harbour or succour them was held to be prejudicial to the good cause. He that is the best disposed towards the godly *(ashono)*, be he kinsman, servant, or friend, and looks energetically after the earth *(gavoi, the kine)*, he is reckoned among the people who are after the heart of Asha and Vohumano. But it is a duty, and one well-pleasing in the sight of Mazda, to do an evil turn by word, intent or action to the wicked. No clemency to them. The adorer of the Falsehood, who consigns house, hamlet, district, and country to misery and death, " him let men correct with the sword." The destruction designed by the enemy recoils on himself, so that a wretched existence shall be his doom. In a word, the proper mission of the faithful is to smite the evil. Should he fail in it he has approved himself well-affected to the brotherhood of Mendacity, and so is one of them. If he omits to assail the fiend, when it is in his power so to do, he is himself on the way to the abode of the Fiend.[52] In those times of fierce struggles, every act of compromise with the adversary was regarded as tantamount to treachery. It could hardly be regarded otherwise. The crusade that was the mission of the reformers and the persecutions to which they were exposed, at least account for their intolerance. Unfortunately the religion they founded carried down to remote posterity the impress of this **lack of forbearance**.

If, on the one hand, we cannot deny **the ethical nature** of the Zarathushtrian discipline, it is self-evident on the other that

[52] *Yasna* 32, 2 ; 31, 18 ; 46, 8 ; 48, 2 ; *yasna* 46 ; 5 and 6 lay down that a ruler shall publicly accuse anyone who has been disobedient to him, and him who is untrue to an agreement entered into.

for a religion of antiquity, the moral element is **not elevated above eudaimonism.** The mandatory ordinances are ever accompanied by the mention of the reward, which awaits the faithful here below as well as hereafter, while menaces of terrible penalties in store for the evil-doers in the inferno of the Druksh are reiterated. The meed of the virtuous, a favourite theme, consists in mundane felicity and vigour, and, as has been already indicated, in salvation and a life without death in heaven. The pious are satisfied that they have earned *kudos* by their sacrifice, in aquitting themselves of their duty towards Mazda.[53]

This accords with the peculiar development of the doctrines of dualism and retribution among the Zarathushtrians, and is a logical sequel to them. And if the recompense, as a rule, is made to depend on sanctity and righteousness, it is in consonance with the commandment that the highest good is appointed for those who offer the largest number of sacrifices, that the **worst lot is reserved for such as bring nothing to Mazda (or his priests?).**[54]

But here and there we get a gleam of a loftier plane of thought. If the pious are enjoined to adore Mazda[55] with prayers with the single object of winning his favour, there are also exhortations to the saintly urging them to bring their souls into unison with Asha[56] and to endeavour by acts to be comparable to Mazda, and to some extents to be his terrestrial embodiments. Whoever violates the moral law, the true doctrine by which the world is rendered blissful, and which was revealed first by Mazda to Zarathushtra and then by Zarathushtra to the world at large,

[53] *Yasna* 34 15; 50, 5; 50, 8 refers to the hymns pronounced to acquire blessings (*podoish ya frasrute izhayao*). In 51, 22, the living, not less than the heroes of the past, Zarathushtra, Vishtaspa, Frashaoshtra, Jamaspa, and Maidyomaongha mentioned in the preceding strophes, receive the bliss (*vahishtem*) for the offerings they bring. *Yasna* 34, 1 is a difficult passage but this much is clear that the return for religious acts, words and prayers is immortality, justice and the possession of abundance, the first fruits of which belong to Mazda.

[54] *Yasna* 51, 6. [55] *Yasna* 51, 20.

[56] *Yasna* 34, 2. The good mind and the actions of the beneficent men (*spentahya neres*) are Mazda's.

feels guilty towards Mazda and the Ahuras and implores his forgiveness for "that deed whatsoever it may be."[57] And what is placed so often in the foreground in the younger books is prominent here too, namely, the idea that the life of a true Mazdayasnian is a life dedicated to the service of Mazda, attuned to his eternal ordinance, a struggle on his side and in accordance with his ways against the dominion of darkness and mendacity.

Naturally, the *Gâthas* furnish no detail regarding **the cult.** Such prescriptions belong to a law-book. The *cultus* is touched upon only here and there. From what little is positively said, it is manifest that in the main it was not different from what was in practice at a later period. In the cult, the prime position was occupied by "the red-hot fire of Mazda." The sacrificial offerings consisted of flesh,[58] sacred cakes, *haurvatat*, and probably a certain beverage which symbolically represented Ameretat." In course of time the latter yielded its place to Haoma.[59] At these sacrifices the *manthras* were recited and sacrificial litanies intoned. The priest charged with this function was, as we saw, the Zaotar, the Indian Hotar, and probably the supreme sacerdotal head was denominated Zarathushtra, as in later ages. Mazda instructs him in what is agreeable to himself with reference to songs of praise and the cult, and in Asha he learns to know God's own path. Mazda teaches him, as one friend would another as to how he should be adored with a prayer worthy of himself. The true Zarathushtrian gives himself up to his God, surrenders to him his soul, or his life-energy; in a word, lives but wholly for his service. From those who heed not Asha, which is to say, who fail in their obligations to God and man, Vohumano remains afar,—Vohumano, the beneficent Mind the cherisher of the godly. And further, as

[57] *Yasna* 31, 16 and 22.

[58] *Myazda* ; *yasna* 34, 3. It is much a question whether the horses and camels, which are mentioned in *yasna* 44, 18, as the gifts for the chanters and are consecrated to Mazda, are to be actually regarded as sacrificial offerings.

[59] *Yasna* 33, 8 and 9. This conjecture has already been spoken of.

he shuns the wild transgressors, Asha shuns those who, by denying Vohumano, offend against Aramaiti knowing full well Mazda's love for her; — those, in other words, who do not observe the second principal duty imposed upon the righteous, **—the sowing of the earth.**

Practical so far, if the cult of the Zarathushtrian is in reality not unfrequently a service rendered for the sake of *kudos*, we do not miss in it altogether a purer and more elevated view; and many an utterance is characterised by a genuine religious spirit.

CHAPTER XV.

MAZDA'S SATELLITES.

Alongside of Mazda in the *Gâthas* stand a **few heavenly beings,** who co-operate with him. They are six in number, are closely allied to him, and latterly are placed, together with him, as **the seven Amesha Spentas** at the head of creation divine.

This term, Amesha Spentas, does not occur in the *Gâthas* proper, but in other Gathic writings. It has been conjectured that in the remotest period they were called Ahuras ; but this has not been proved. Another question is whether, as known to the poets of the *Gâthas*, they formed a heptade at all. This has been asserted, regard being had to the seven Adityas of the Indians, and it has been opined that the worship of seven supreme existences, which we encounter in both the kindred races, at least in posterior times, demonstrates the existence of the belief in the epoch, when they had a common habitat. The numeral seven as a sacred figure is assuredly old. We have already admitted as much, but did the Zarathushtrian reformers employ it from the first with reference to their divine spirits? This is doubtful, even of the Adityas ; and their number is in no way fixed and certain. And I would certainly call it in as question regards the spirits, which were latterly definitely named Amesha Spentas, for even in the younger *Avesta* occasionally more than seven are enumerated. One of the poets on one occasion has combined in a single strophe all those which subsequently were reckoned among them, and he has, at the same time, specially mentioned **Spento Mainyush** as one of them :—"Through Spento Mainyush and Vahishtem Mano, through words and deeds springing from Asha, may Mazda-Khshathra-Armaiti Ahura give me Haurvatat and Ameretat (health and immortality),"[60] and there is no doubt that

[60] *Yasna* 47, 1.

he meant it to be so. But properly speaking it is eight spirits that are here invoked, for Spento Mainyush is clearly, distinguished from Mazda Ahura. Then again at least two of the spirits, health and immortality, here appear not as personal beings, but as celestial boons.

Further, Mazda Ahura is in the text united with Khshatra and Armaiti in a trinity, and finally, as we shall see, Ahura Mazda stood so high above all the rest in the oldest announcements, that the idea had yet not suggested itself of placing him on a level with them even as *primus inter pares*. If, therefore, the figure seven was a sacred one to the Eastern Aryans, the fact that the Iranians at a subsequent period applied it to their Amesha Spentas and the Indians to their Adityas does not show that originally there were seven of both classes of existences. Geush Urva, Geush Tashan, and Atar, the fire-god were also occasionally so named, and in a younger Gathic writing we shall find still more personifications reckoned among them. It is possible that the strophe cited above furnished the Zarathushtrian theologians of the post-Gathic ages with a means to elevate the seven mentioned therein to a special category, the passage being turned into a proof of the new tenet. They found seven and not eight beings in it, because to them Spento Mainyush had long become identical with Mazda.

A peculiarly intimate relation subsists between **Mazda, Vohumano,** and **Asha Vahishta.** There is no question but that they play the principal role. All the three together are entitled the most beneficent, and the most benignant helpers of the human race.[61] To them follow **Khshathra** and **Armaiti.** Further in the back-ground appear Haurvatat and Ameretat. They are seen much less frequently as persons, the two last certainly not oftener than Sraosha, who, like another female personification, Ashi, figures as the image of Khshathra and Vohumano. Let us first examine the special significance of each separately and then their general or common character and the relations in which they stand to Mazda.

[61] *Yasna* 28, 9.

VOHUMANO.

Vohumano literally means the "good spirit" or the "good mind." The poets knew this. They seldom employed the term as a fixed proper name ; oftener they named the angel, *Vahisthem mano*, the "best mind." We may call him the personification of the righteous or pious mind, the frame of mind, veracious and pleasing in God's sight. In fact, he approaches nearest to what we understand by the Holy Ghost,—*Spento mainyu*, indicating something different, though the term is mostly so interpreted. Hence the mention of his[62] oracles, his doctrine and his wisdom. With Aramaiti he brings Mazda's revelations to Zarathushtra. But reference is mostly made to his actions and his energy, by which he helps on the growth of Mazda's domination, so that we may even say that he actually gives the sovereignty to him.[63]

As a person he is characterised above all by his right manly quality *virtuoso hunaratat*.[64] He is the cherisher and heavenly representative of all beings,[65] especially of men, and of the order of the pious on earth, who bear his device or mark (*fradakhshta*).[66] I should not be surprised if he were the Manu transformed by speculation,—the first father of our race among the Eastern Aryans, perhaps also among the Old Aryans, who left behind but feeble traces in the Zarathushtrian dogma—a personified religious-ethical idea, consequently, superposed on an original national hero.

ASHA.

Asha is common to the Zarathustrian and the Vedic religions. It is the same word as the Vedic *rta*, being equally derived from the Aryan *arta*, and is not essentially different from it in

[62] *Yasna* 48, 9 and 29, 6: I derive Vafush from *vap*, to weave, and not from *vap*, to throw.

[63] *Yasna* 48, 11. *Yasna* 49, 5. *Yasna* 43, 7. *Yasna* 31, 10-11. *Yasna* 43, 16. *Yasna* 45, 4, *vangheush verezyanto manangho*, the very active Vohumano. *Yasna* 48, 8. *Yasna* 30, 8. *Yasna* 31, 6. *Yasna* 51, 21, the Khshathrem created by Vohumano.

[64] *Yasna* 50, 8. [65] *Gœthao vispao*. *Yasna* 34, 3.

[66] *Vangheush haoz thwat manangho*. *Yasna* 45, 9.

signification. Only the Indians have not personified him, as the Iranians have. The concept is, therefore, an old one, originally non-Zarathushtrian, but adopted by it, as being very appropriate. Or better, it so dominated the original Aryan faith that it asserted itself in the religions sprung from it, how divergent soever they otherwise were.

There can be little question regarding the significance of this personification and yet it is impossible to express it in one word. Some translate it as "purity;" others, following Plutarch, see "truth" in it. Neither of these is incorrect, but both are imperfect equivalents, and to the last word we attach a different sense. The base-idea is that of being "fitted to" or "proper," and thus it indicates "to establish or to consolidate." Hence *asha* or *rta* is that which is befitting, becoming, proper as well as what is determined, regulated, legitimate, righteous. Among the Indians, as well as the Iranians, the term is employed, in the first instance, with reference to sacrifice and the cult, and so we may probably translate it by "pious." But it is by no means limited to piety. It comprehends all that we understand by "divine order of the world," especially the moral order. It embraces all the duties of man in general and his obligations to the heavenly powers in particular.

As a rule we shall translate the substantive by "uprightness" or "order," the adjective by "righteous" or "pious," and also differently, where the sense requires it, but not without, at the same time, calling attention to the original word.

Asha then, or, as his full name runs, Asha Vahishta, is, as a personification of all that is dutiful and god-fearing, the controller of divine laws and the prime factor or personage in the cult. The conduct of religious operations devolves on him. Longevity is attained by the practice of "Vohumano's order," which obviously is an allusion to the every-day cult. He is called the "order incarnate"—*astavat ashem*.[67] And when the seer asks:—"This I inquire of Thee, tell me aright, Ahura, how shall I pray with a

[67] *Yasna* 33, 14. *Yasna* 43, 2, 16.

prayer worthy of Thee?" he follows it up by the supplication:— "May friendly succour be vouchsafed us through Asha, when he comes to us with the Good Mind (Vohu Mano)."[68]

No marvel that, as the representative of the sacrificial service to which the Aryan ascribes such terrible potency and such rich blessings, he is the most powerful foe of the Druksh, who destroys his settlements. Her strength, however, does not avail her much against him. She will have to surrender herself into his hands and he will completely overthrow her, ere the renovation or the resurrection of the world.[69]

Finally, as such, he is connected with Aramaiti, who, as we shall see, is his complement with Haurvatat and Ameretat, who, as will also be shown, are represented by the two most important offerings, and above all with **the fire**, whose genius he himself becomes at a later stage.[70]

As the concept of Asha, so also was **the worship of fire** an heritage from the earlier times to the Zarathushtrian reformers, a bequest which they would not forego, but piously preserved. To the fire must be brought the offering of worship. It comes to the pious, strong in Asha and with the strength of Vohumano. It is his ægis against the wicked glance of the vindictive, and belongs to Mazda, who, with it and with his mind or spirit, supports Asha.[71]

Along with the worship of fire, has an old system of **ordeal of divine judgment** remained imbedded in the Mazdayasnian faith? At all events it has, according to the tradition. It is related that the celebrated Atarpad Mahrespand subjected himself to a glorious ordeal of fire, and vindicated the Zarathushtian faith in the

[68] *Yasna* 44, 16.

[69] *Yasna* 30, 8. Ahura rules over those who deliver the Druksh into the hands of Asha. In 31, 1, I translate *gæthao* by settlements and not by "*wesen*" as does Geldner, for it is not clear to me what could be the meaning of "*Wesen Ashas.*"

[70] *Yasna* 44, 10. *Yasna* 31, 6, *mathrem yim haurvatato ashaæya ameretatashcha. Yasna* 31, 3 and *Yasna* 39, 8, where *utvazishta* is one of the sacred fires.

[71] *Yasna* 43, 9; 43, 4; 46, 7, *thwahmat athrashaha nananghashcha,*

reign of Shahpuhr II. Molten lead was poured on the chest, if it did no harm, it established the truth of the doctrine and the claim to apostleship. According to several exegetes, the *Gâthas* refer to it in many places and the pioneers of the Zarathushtrian precepts are said to have put their antagonists to shame by successfully issuing out of trials by fire. Others are of the view that, in the passages in question, the last judgment is referred to when all will be purified by fire, the wicked suffering tortures and the good experiencing an agreeable warmth. I am convinced, however, that this dogma is to be found only as a germ in the *Gâthas*. When they speak of a definite decisive division of two parties, or contending sections, they merely indicate the struggle between the Mazdayasnians and the Dævayasnians. The eschatological deduction is a later thought. It is possible that men were willing to decide the contest by an appeal to the test of fire, for there is the unmistakable mention of Mazda's hot red fire, as well as of his spirit. It is also possible to construe this only as a figurative language, employed by the poets, or at least to look upon it as we do on the encounter of Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. In any case this barbarous animistic usage did not belong to the Zarathushtrian canon. It was a survival which was still tolerated.[72]

KHSHATHRA.

Khshathra is at once the sovereignty of Mazda in the abstract and his empire, which is celestial as well as terrestrial.

[72] According to Geldner, and in his footsteps Jackson (*Beszenbergers Beitraege*, xiv, 15 ff., and "A Hymn of Zoroaster," respectively), there is no reference to divine judgment or a decision in strophe 3 of *Yasna* 31. They construe *rana* in the dual or in the plural, occurring in *Yasna* 31 ; 18 in 17 6 and in 51; 9 not as two rival or contending parties, but variously as "the two helpers of Mazda," as "the spirit and fire," as "the fire and lead," and as "Mithra and Rashnu." I am not satisfied with this explanation.

Also Kern in a private communication is of opinion that *rana* can have no meaning, but the one given above. He assigns here to *Ash* the narrow sense of oath, if not divine judgment, and that corresponds to the meaning of the word in the Ossetian, Armenian and Slav. languages.

[The question of Ordeal in Iran is exhaustively treated by Dr. Dhalla in the *Museon*, 1910.—Tr.]

The things celestial are delineated in vivid colours. Even prior to the creation, this dominion belonged to Mazda Ahura, Asha and Aramaiti. It is indestructible. There is there reverence for perfection, and forgiveness of sins. There also live the supreme spirits. It is also known as Khshathrem Vairim, the desirable dominion, the most advantageous portion, the best lot. The pious long for it, and as their reward for their prayers addressed to the Deity, they hope for a share in it "to their eternal beatitude.[73]" On the earth it appears as the domination of the good spirit, from which his blessings emanate, in which, Asha with Armaiti, *i.e.*, the worship of God with active life (or, as we would say, prayer and work) flourish, and in which Mazda graciously promotes true life. If it is stated that Mazda created Asha out of or by himself, but that he had Khshathra brought to light by means of Vohumano, then we must think of the kingdom of heaven on earth, which is a production of the good spirit.[74] How far are we still from that posterior doctrine, which makes of Khshathra Vairya a genius of metal, a god of riches!

ARAMATI.

Aramati, still so named by the poets of the *Gâthas*, and corrupted subsequently into **Armaiti**, is an old East Aryan goddess, who was received from the first into the Zarathushtrian system, and occurs sometimes in the *Veda*. Here she is far from occupying the place of importance which is assigned to *rta*. On the other hand, she plays an important rôle in the *Avesta*, and is scarcely less adored than Asha, with whom she is often conjoined. Plutarch calls her the Creator of wisdom and this she is, according to the tradition, as she also is the guardian spirit, or deity, of the earth. Strange as the union of these two may appear, it dates from a distant past and is to be met

[73] *Yasna* 51, 12 and 4, *bagem qibibairishtem*. *Yasna* 28, 3.

[74] *Yasna* 51, 21; 30, 8; 33, 13, 14; 34, 3.

with equally among the Indians and the Iranians.[75] Besides, it is by no means inexplicable, neither does it conflict with the signification of the name. Aramati indicates the solicitous, the good Mother Earth, who considers what is salutary for her children and is accordingly ever denominated the beneficent.

How the reformers were able to adopt this Aryan divinity into their system, while they rejected all the other popular gods becomes clear, as soon as we reflect that the fostering of agriculture went hand-in-hand with religion and constituted such an important part of their work of reform. She is therefore actually represented as the guardian deity of the husbandman. A daughter of Ahura Mazda, who belonged to Geush-Tashan and lived in divine company, was allowed by the deity her choice as to whom she would take under her protection on earth, whether her protégé was to be a husbandman or a non-agriculturist. She elected the industrious tiller of the soil, the pious lord who advances the good spirits, and consequently her followers must, when the false and the true preachers come to them, always make investigations to find out on which side lies the Lie. Her activity, so runs another passage, is manifested in manual labour, in contradistinction to the expressions of Vohumano, which are produced by the mouth and the tongue. With her comes the true sovereignty, which secures a good dwelling place, fosters tillage and thereby disables the blood-thirsty

[75] The *σημίουργος σοφιάς* of Plutarch corresponds to Neriosengh's translation *sampurnamanasa*. He also explains her as *prithvipati*, lord of the earth. As Spiegel observes (*Eranische Alterthumskunde*, II, 28), Sayana explains *Rig Veda*, vii, 36, 8 and 42, 3 by *bhumih*, the earth. This, however, is usually objected to, as incorrect. But it is better than Grassman's translation "*die andachtsgottin*," and the explanation of Bergaigne, who would make of her a personification of prayer (*Religion Vedique*, 1,320 *suive* and iii, 243), in which there is only relative truth. Also *Rig Veda* v, 43, 6, brings her in connection with *rta*:—*mahim aramatim jnam devim—rtajnam*; in *Rig Veda*, vii, 36, 8, she is invoked along with Pushan, the god of husbandmen, Bhaga, the god of fortune, and Purandhi, the dispenser of superabundance, which is altogether in keeping with her character as a benevolent earth-goddess.

fiend. By means of wisdom, good words and deeds, one becomes a beneficent follower of Aramati.

And finally this last significance of the ancient goddess explains why she has always been united with Asha, with whom she progresses together, whose creation and seat she is called, and how reference is made to her own *Asha*, which one must study well in order to enter the kingdom of Mazda. Asha is the informing concept of all religious and ethical obligations, as prescribed by the Zarathushtrian doctrine. Wherever she is regarded, settled mode of life prospers. The well sown earth is the creation and the seat of this religion, and to cultivate the land is a religious duty. Hence the older mythical character of the deity is also well manifested in the Zarathushtrian Aramati.

But of yore she had another phase still made her a sort of dependent of Asha, for Aramati can also mean "the right prayer, the right pious thought," which could help make her a genius of piety. This is not her only significance, as is usually supposed, though there are isolated passages in which she appears so to have been comprehended. When her sacrifices are spoken of, sacrifices with which Mazda is glorified, or her prayers and blessings, then this sense appears to be the most suitable. Yet, as said above, such are stray passages, for when it is said she instructs Zarathushtra in the ordinance of the infallible wisdom of Mazda, or brings to the Prophet, along with Vohumano, Mazda's revelation, that can be applicable to her only in her capacity of the guardian deity of the husbandman and the patron saint of settled life.

HAURVATAT AND AMERETAT.

Indissolubly united are Haurvatat and Ameretat, perfect well-being, or sanity and immortality:—two concepts, which the *Veda* and the *Avesta* share in common, but which, however, in the *Avesta* have been transformed into spirits and united into a duality. It seems that their personifications in the *Gâthas* took place in their incipient stage. At any rate, they play a

subordinate rule and seldom appear independently. More often the words occur in their ordinary significance without any personification. For instance, they are even called "the food of Mazda," which, he, in his kingdom (by which is meant here the kingdom of heaven), bestows on the pious, after having conferred on them here below strength and endurance. For strength and endurance are the earthly blessings, which correspond to the heavenly *Haurvatat* and *Ameretat*. As personal spirits, both belonged, at least at this time, to the cult. Their *manthra* is joined with that of Asha. They promise the priestly singers their reward, namely, steeds and camels; and next to endurance, which is the gift of Ameretat, we have mention of the *draona*, that is to say, the sacrificial cake of Haurvatat. Ameretat here fully occupies the place of Haoma, so that we might hazard the conjecture that, in the cult of *Gâthas*, it was turned into the drink of deathlessness.

SRAOSHA.

Even **Sraosha**, a word which several times is employed in its ordinary connotation of obedience, occupies but a very modest place as a genius in the *Gâthas*. He is a messenger between the terrestrial and the celestial worlds, is despatched by Mazda with Vohumano to his favourites, distributes together with Ashi, the bestower of riches, blessings among men, leads the pious on to the eternal domains of the beneficent Spirit along paths, which, starting from righteousness, conduct to the seat, where is Mazda Ahura enthroned, and he is even called "the Way to Godhead." Sraosha seems to have been in the beginning only a clearly defined heavenly figure, and to have acquired only at a later period great importance as the representative of divine revelation.

AIREMA.

The Aryan god **Aryaman**, in the *Veda* the companion of Varuna and Mitra, retained his place of honour also with the Zarathushtrians. At least they recognise a genius in whom ke

is concealed, **Airema Ishyo,** the desired friend. In one of the oldest prayers, which bears his name, the wish is expressed that he might come in order to delight the men and women of Zarathushtra by his presence, to which is joined another prayer that Mazda may shower his blessings upon those who deserve them through righteousness.

These are **the higher beings** who were obviously acknowledged in the most ancient Zarathushtrian doctrine and who were revered by the early order. Partly deities of an earlier epoch, but afterwards substantially modified and reduced to harmony with the principles of the new teachings, properly speaking they are none of them gods at all, with the single exception of Mazda Ahura. Most of these figures are more personifications than persons, in fact, are neither more nor less than concepts appearing in the shape of divine beings whose real significance was nevertheless perfectly clear. Here and there they occur as mere manifestations of the existence of the supreme Deity, the effectuation of His spirit.

Some times two of them, as a rule the two that are pre-eminent, Vohumano and Asha, are united to Mazda in an almost indissoluble Trinity. Asha's will is in the most complete accord with Mazda's. Later on this is said of all the seven Amesha Spentas. That early in this period the seven were known as closely combined and elevated to higher rank than other Yazatas cannot be proved. On the contrary Sraosha, Geush Tashan, Aryaman, but above all the first, are held in no less esteem than, for instance, Haurvatat and Ameretat. And, however hostile **the new preaching** was to the Dæva worship, that it had its roots in the elder faith, and that it **was a reformation** of it, is evident from the harmony between Mazda Ahura and Varuna, and the conservation of the older gods, after peculiar modifications, such as Aramati, and Aryaman, and the ancient prevailing beliefs, such as those in Asha and Ameretat, and from other circumstances to which we shall refer further on.

One of the most important features of this reform is the tendency it shows to Mǫnotheism. Too little value has been

hitherto attached to the fact that even the most exalted celestial beings stand by no means on the same footing with **Mazda. He alone is properly God,** of whose being created or born there is no mention anywhere, except in an heretical doctrine promulgated centuries later. The rest of the spirits are all created or have come to birth. They are the creatures of the progeny of Mazda, and by consequence distinct from him, not only in rank, but in their very essence. **As a matter of fact, as well as in actual practice, the system of Zarathushtrian religion in its most ancient form known to us was monotheistic.**

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DUALISM.

It is universally known that a sharply defined penetrating dualism, formed in minute detail, belongs to the prominent characteristics of Parsiism. Already at the earliest stage of the Zarathushtrian religion of which we are aware this characteristic reveals itself. But at the earliest times it was not by far so one-sidedly developed and with so much detail as later on. Between the dualism of the Gathas and that of the younger Avasta there exists, even in its principal features, a divergence, although the former has in itself the germ of all that which was to have developed subsequently.

It has been rightly observed that the dualism of the Zarathustrians is no new dogma, is no product of mere scholastic speculation but that it is the continuation of a philosophy which all the Aryan peoples share in common. Here, too, the Mazdayasnian doctrine joins itself on to historical data. All Aryan religions are of dualistic nature. The struggle between light and darkness, life and death, good and evil, is the main subject of all mythology or religious teaching, and all the three pairs of contrasts have never been clearly discriminated but have always tended to fuse and mingle with each other. The doctrine of the Avesta indeed has not arisen of itself by gradual evolution, but it has borrowed from this primitive dualism a portion of its own material. The Zarathushtrian reformers preserved this traditional form, utilizing the dogma to clothe their own moral, religious, and social tenets.

Two spirits (Mainyu), so runs the doctrine of the Gathas, existed from the first beginning, the good (Vahyo) and the evil (Akem), in thought, speech and action personally represented. They are likewise called the beneficient or the wholesome Spenta, and the wicked or aggressive Anghra. They took

counsel with each other and agreed, each according to his pleasure, to create, the former life, the latter non-life. Accordingly, the worst spirits exist for the wicked, the liars; the best for the righteous and the pious. One of the two spirits, the genus of mendacity, elected to do evil and the beneficient spirit "which covers itself with the strong heaven" would create good. And on the side of the latter ranged all those who by their publicly performed deeds desired to propitiate Ahura Mazda. From this time the parting of the spirits is complete and the beneficent spirit assures its rival that their minds, doctrines, institutions, opinions, words or deeds, bodies or souls, can never more go together.

In this semi-mythical-semi-dogmatic presentment the oldest propagandists of the Zarathushtrian doctrine sought an explanation of the origin of evil. The later doctrine is laid down quite differently. It represents as against Ahura Mazda an equal opponent though with lesser power, named Anghro Mainyush, and imputes to the influence of the latter not only all that is bad morally, but also naturally, like darkness, sleep and what not. Here we have only the first beginnings of such an idea. For the poets of the Gatha, the same divine artificer is the creator of life and darkness, sleep and vigilance, morning, noon and night. The name Anghro Mainyush is no doubt sometimes applied to the genus of mendacity, but it is not his constant epithet, least of all is it a proper name; he is also called by other names. In the Gathas, Aeshma is the most frequently used name for the pre-eminent evil spirit; along with it also occur the names Rema or Rama, neither of which is identifiable with Anghro Mainyush. Even Spento Mainyush has not yet been entirely amalgamated with Mazda Ahura. When sometimes he is addressed by this title he is oftener differentiated clearly from him just as are the divine spirits Vohumano, Asha and others. Even Mazda's beneficent spirit is spoken of as an attribute of his, but not identical with him. Both the spirits, accordingly, are subordinate to Mazda, who here, in a certain measure, occupies the place which in latter times was assigned

by the Zendiks over him and over Ahriman to Zrvan Akaranam the time without beginning or the endless time. His amalgamation with the better of the two original spirits was ready to hand, and was already in its incipient stage. And both the spirits belong more to the domain of religious and philosophical speculations than to practical religious doctrine.

In practice the ancient Aryan evil spirits or lie-demons, the Drujas, occupied the supreme position. The Drukhsh without qualifications is the designation for all evil spirits in general. Later on, however, she forfeited her position and was subordinated not only to Anghra Mainyush but even to the Daevas. The Daevas, the gods of the elder faith, which have still retained their position among the Indians, had already sunk at the Gatha period from their place in heaven into hell. It was, however, well understood that originally they did not belong to the inimical genii. We cannot naturally expect from our hymns a historical explanation of this fact. We can only conjecture the occasion which brought it about. The well-known theory that a religious split, at the close of what is called the East Aryan period, had it for its consequence that one half of the Aryan nation remained true to their Daevas, disassociated themselves from the other half and crossed over the Indus, while the other half accepting the purified worship of Ahura spread themselves in Iran, settled themselves there, with the result that there the Asuras here the Daevas became evil demons,—this theory can as such be no longer defended. The Daevas were undoubtedly long after the separation of the two branches of the East Aryans adored along with the Ahuras in Iran as gods of the country, and it was only a long time after that the Zarathustrian reformation could have ousted them from their position of honour. The Daeva worshippers, against whom the prophets of Iran fought, were no Indians but Iranians, no foreigners but people of the same country. Probably they strove against the Daevas on two grounds: first because their latria and mythological conceptions were irreconcilable with the principles of the new doctrine, and secondly because their wor-

shippers did not show themselves inclined to adopt the new gospel, preferring to remain true to their religious traditions and usages. This could not be conceded to them, and therefore the Daeva worshippers resisted the new doctrine, persecuted their preachers, fought against their adherents, and thus the Daevas became false gods and evil spirits to the Zarathushtrian believers. This is, so far as I can see, the only possible historical explanation. The Daevas in Iran fared about as well as did the Baalim in Judah. Baal was also a honorific title of the deity which was applied to Jahve before the prophetic reformation; we know how he has become synonimous with the abominated idols.

If the old texts furnish us with no historical explanation—mythical explanations they have not preserved for us—we have to borrow the historic in a certain measure from the mythic. The briefest and the simplest of these mythological explanations is this: the Daevas were given the choice between the two primitive spirits, and of their free-will declared themselves for the wicked and bound to Aeshma. Another one, which however is not essentially contradictory of the preceding, is as follows: along with the relatives and the Court entourage of Mazda Ahura, along with all the heavenly beings, the Daevas also come as belonging to them with a view to offer their homage and to offer their service as servants of god. But Mazda ruling through the good spirit, Vohumano, a friend of comely righteousness, Asha, elects Aramaiti, the good-doer, the benevolent. "May she be ours." He repudiates the Daevas, the progeny of Akomano, the wicked mind or spirit. By means of the Druksh and their own arrogance the Daevas betrayed themselves. Thus they spread unbelief in the seven quarters of the world, that is to say, they are to blame because the preaching of the true doctrine is not adhered to, mankind have been estranged from an understanding with Mazda and Asha, are treacherously deprived of true life and immortality, and they have assured the kingdom to the liars by means of the wicked mind (Akomano) and evil spirit (Ako Mainyush);—

a reply to those who believed that the worship of the Daevas could consist with devotion to Mazda. Their worshippers can be no good rulers. Their priests surrender the mythical cow, the earth, to Aeshma. Their devotees are Khrafstra men. Therefore the pious must have no commerce with and abjure the Daevas. Nay, it is a duty to fight against them with all one's might. This is most efficiently effected by means of the *mathras* of the Mazdayasnian doctrine and by submission to Mazda. If only the struggle is maintained with all available force victory will not remain far. The destroying angel Spayathra, will finally smite the druksh and with her the Daevas must perish.

The Zarathushtrian dualism had therefore its basis in the ancient Aryan universal dualism. It is only a development of the former. The reformers could connect their ethical ideas and their conception of God the best with the notion which from of old people they had formed of Ahuras, a name which was applied to the supreme Daevas and especially to such as possessed ethical significance. Consequently Daeva, formerly a general term like Ahura, came to be applied more and more to the nature gods of inferior standing and fell into discredit; and it was the struggle of the new ethical preaching against the representatives of the elder faith which so heightened the contrast.

A necessary consequence of this dualistic philosophy is that a belief in a heaven and a hell is evidently prominent in the Gathas. The old idea of the empire of the dead, whose king was Yima, to which the souls of all the dead go, has in the legend of Yima a weak echo, but is in fact given up in favour of that which apportions to Mazda Ahura and the Druksh each a separate region and the respective future abode of the pious and the unfaithful. This should not be confounded with the doctrine of the two worlds which are often spoken of,—the spiritual or heavenly and the temporal or terrestrial. They by no means are opposed to each other as good and evil. Both belong to Mazda, although the evil exercises its power equally in the earthly region. In the heaven, Garodenmana, the

abode of song, lives Mazda with his satellites and they approach there with the food and drink of immortality, Haurvatat and Ameretat. The prayers of the pious are there heard and granted. There is the reward which Zarathushtra promised of old to the Magavans and all the faithful. To it leads the bridge Chinvat, the bridge of the Concourse as it is usually denominated since all good and bad come together there, although only the former reach heaven passing along it while the latter as soon as they venture upon it fall headlong into the abyss. The poet describes how the soul and the personality, the self-conscious soul of the wicked, arrives there, shivers and whines at the prospect of the fearful fate in store for the adorer of the Lie. But the worshipper of Mazda who belongs to him by word, thought, and deed, is conducted to it by his prophets. Naturally the unfaithful are placed on a par with the wicked. Those who pursue principles other than those of Mazda repair to the habitation of the Druksh because they are verily the sons of her creation. There eternal misery, "Sadra," hardens them, there man lives in darkness, there is infinity of dolor and there the Drujas meet the damned with abominable foodstuffs.

The description resembles in its essentials that of the nether regions, the land from which no one returns, *irsit la tarat*, of the Babylonians. The idea of a purification and salvation of all, even the wicked, does not occur in the Gathas. That this reward, this retribution, was conceived of as something good or evil to be expected immediately after death is manifest from the passages we have cited. But in other places there is a clear reference to the great separation at the close of the history of the world, the last judgment after which the good spirit will achieve the most complete triumph and the power of the Druksh will be annihilated by Asha. And while much in the Gathas that has reference to the usual explanation of the judgment must be understood as the distinction between the faithful and the unfaithful, between the worshippers of Ahura and the Daevas, still the doctrine that at the close of the world the just retribution shall be awarded to the

good and the wicked is by no means foreign to these old documents. More than once this completion of the world is alluded to when not only for individuals but for all eternal life shall begin, continue undisturbed, and Mazda's coveted world shall take the place of this imperfect existence. It shall be preceded by a terrible universal fire-test, the ordeal which has already been mentioned. Supreme good is for those who worship Mazda according to his wish, the most miserable portion is his who has given him nothing. The priests, who consecrate here below the sacrificial cakes and the holy beverages will be there lords of Haurvatat and Ameretat and will have entry to it by means of their powerful mathras. The Daevas and the men who serve them may hold these promises to be false; the holy minstrels are convinced that it will all come about at the hour appointed of Mazda.

CHAPTER XVII.

ETHICS.

Several times the **Daena** is spoken of in high-sounding expressions, is personified in the *cultus*, and is assigned a high rank amongst the most prominent Yazatas. This expression has been construed as law; some translate it religion. In the Avesta it is called Ahurian, Zarathushtrian, and Mazdayasnian. The Daena has the power to remove all sins, not by the pardon granted to the sinner, but by the struggle with them. As the strong south wind clears the atmosphere, so for the pious (Ashavan) it sweeps away thoughts, words and deeds, that are evil.[a] Synonymous with, and not essentially different from, the Daena is **Datem Vidoyum Zarathushtrish,** which is the law directed against the Daevas and of which it is said that it is as much better, greater and more beautiful than all the other words, as the lake Vourukasha in the heavens is larger than the sea, as the river is larger than the pond, and as the tree is larger than the shrub.

Side by side with this glorification of the Daena and its power stands a somewhat peculiar view which does not wholly coincide with the one already described. According to the latter the Mazdayasnian law annuls all sins as soon as a man accepts this religion, especially the sins which he may have committed before his adoption of it; but once having accepted the creed his trespasses can be expiated only by long ceremonial penances or by monetary penalties. There are certain crimes which may be forgiven to a worshipper of the Daevas as soon as he is converted but which can never be pardoned to a Mazdayasnian. This looks like a premium put upon entry into the Zarathushtrian religion. It naturally proceeds from the view that he who is acquainted with the Law must understand it better than those who adhere to the Daevas and who consequently remain a prey of the Daevas, unless they abjure the false religion, to the time of the resurrection. And whoever once accepts the Law is bound to follow it.

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[a] See Appendix.

The whole ethical code of the Avesta is dominated by the idea that the religion which it proclaims indicates in the first instance the importance of the settled life of agriculturists and herdsmen and that therefore it execrates the nomadic bands of brigands who follow the worship of the Daevas. Agriculture is the true cult of the sacred mother earth. Apart from the places consecrated to the pure cult there are three others which are most beloved of it, namely, the places where the pious man has founded a complete household with the sacred fire and sufficiency, secondly, the places where he grows most corn and food-yielding trees and irrigates waterless plains, and lastly, the places where cattle large and small are reared in the largest number. As opposed to these places the most revolting to the earth are, first of all the passage leading to hell along the spur of Mount Arezura where the demons gather together, and secondly, the spot where are interred the corpses of men and dogs, where such dakhmas are built and the holes of Anghra Mainyu are to be found, and where the pious man with his wife and children is dragged to captivity along his dreary path. From this results the obligation to dig up graveyards, to destroy dakhmas and the hollows of Ahriman, to sow corn and rear herbage, to plant fruit-bearing trees, to have solicitude for irrigation by diverting superfluous water and to support, wherever necessary, the pious compatriot.

Between these regulations and prescriptions has been interpolated from olden times a remarkable panegyric on agriculture, which though here and there somewhat obscure, is clear as regards its general tenor. The land lying fallow or unsown is compared to a beautiful young maiden longing for a partner, who ultimately secures a lover to whom she bears a son. The earth grants all her abundance to him who industriously tills her but he that neglects her must beg for his daily bread and live on the leavings of the rich. To sow corn is to observe the Mazdayasnian Law as well as to propagate it, for when the corn ripens the daevas are alarmed and the more it

grows the more miserable becomes their plight and wherever there is a bumper crop they simply are not.

The Zarathushtrian religion, according to the Avesta, is no religion of fasts and abstinence, and the higher grades of the Magians of whom it is reported that they abstained from many varieties of flesh, or from flesh altogether, have introduced a foreign element in it, or at any rate they belonged to a different peculiar sect. In order to fulfil what is prescribed by Asha the world requires well-nourished men who are strong enough to cultivate the land and bring up wise sons. Voluntary indigence, celibacy, itinerant mendicancy, and self-mortification are not only foreign to this religion but are positively denounced. The married man, the master of a household, the father of a family, the rich man, these all stand far above the celibate and above such who possess neither house nor children and are poor. Very beautifully it is said in a later writing that "the observance of the fast among us means this, that we fast from sins with our eyes, tongues, ears and hands and feet, and that what is called fast in other religions, that is to say, abstinence from food, in our faith means committing not sins, "—entirely in the spirit of the Avesta. It is quite in keeping with this that economy is highly recommended. What becomes impure by pollution injures only the religious. The impure and the infidel may make use of it. For Ahura does not tolerate that anything that is of the least value should be wasted.

The principal virtues, therefore, which the moral code of the Mazdayasnian recommends are precisely those which are esteemed by an industrious population of agriculturists,—diligence, vigilance and kindness to followers of the same creed, and honesty and chastity. Early rising is a necessity in the life of a peasant and hence the cock Parodars, the priest of Sarosh as he is called, is paid such high honour because he awakens the faithful in the morning. The motive for it again is the care for the sacred fire which calls for its aliment thrice in the night. Later ecclesiastical speculation which makes

Sleep, which in the Gathas is a creation of Ahura Mazda, a product of Anghra Mainyu looks upon praying all night and reciting the holy syllables as a holier function than quiet rest at night, but we gather that this is a later suggestion and that the exigencies of practical life were the real basis of the commandment.

Obligations of amity and fellow-feeling seem to have been confined to brethren of the creed only, but to them one may refuse nothing, neither gold nor education. The voice of the poor man which one unconcernedly passes by without giving him a cast-off cloth resounds as a loud complaint through the whole universe and reaches to the throne of God.

The rules in point of probity and truth with reference to the plighted word are detailed and stringent. He that repays not his debt is a thief who commits robbery upon a co-religionist. Contracts are of various kinds ; sometimes it is but a simple vow, sometimes the understanding effected by the joining of hands in which the pawn is a sheep, a head of cattle, a man, or a piece of gold. But whatever the stake, it is the duty of the believing Zarathushtrian exactly to comply with his promise ; only the penalties are the severer the more solemn is the pledge violated. Even the near relations are held responsible according to the Law for a thousand years.*

This last regulation is a survival of the old legal institutions, which were adopted into the Zarathushtrian system, although, properly speaking, it is not in harmony with it, and the same remark holds good of the ordeal of boiling water, the oath-water, at which no one can repudiate his obligations without undergoing the heaviest of penalties. It was an ordeal from animistic times. Such ordeals we come across in all the laws of antiquity, even in the laws of Israel. We have already seen how rectitude and love for truth stood under the super-

* Pahlavi works testify to the existence of elaborate codes of practical common Law in Persia affording insight into the social ideals of the Iranians. See Bartholomae's *uber ein sasan Rechtsbuch.* (Tr.)

vision of Mithra, so that a violator of his word is denominated Mithrodruksh. All manner of unchaste conduct was in the Law threatened with the sternest punishments. The ordinances testify to the regard for continence, humanity and respect of filial ties. Artificial abortion and infanticide, looked upon as venial by so many nations of antiquity, are here most solemnly condemned. It is the duty of the father to maintain the unmarried mother till the birth of her child and then to look after the child till its 7th year.

The Law speaks with repugnance of the unchaste woman running after the pious and impious, the faithful and the infidel, the criminal and the innocent. Her very glance is a blast upon nature and it was left to the choice of every one to spare or to kill her. Conjugal infidelity, Jahi, is the darling daughter of the Evil One.

In a code of moral prescriptions which attaches such high value to chastity and continence it sounds strange to see a form of marriage recommended or even represented as the most sacred, which according to the moral conscience of well-nigh all the civilized nations is the most heinous offence, namely, the union amongst the next-of-kin, technically called the **Khvaetvadatha.** The word occurs only a few times in the Avesta but always only as an adjective. Nevertheless the most ancient scholiasts and translators as well as most of the European scholars have seen in it the marriage of near relations. It is undoubted that such a form of union was not unusual among the Iranians especially the Achaemenides, and irrefutable evidence proves that latterly it was recommended by the Magians. But there is not the slightest trace of proof that this word already possessed this particular significance for the authors of the Avesta and in order to find this sense we must needs do some violence to the passages in which it occurs. We may accordingly say this much without hesitation that the Avesta does not recommend the next-of-kin unions. *b*

b See Appendix by Tr.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XVII

SOME BUDDHISTIC PARALLELS.

(BY THE TRANSLATOR.)

With reference to Vendidad iii, 42[1] and the ethical triad supposed to be peculiar to the Avesta, Dr. Tiele makes the following note ;

" The incessantly repeated formula—Thoughts, Words and Deeds—is peculiar neither to the Zarathushtrian nor even to the Iranian. We find something similar both in the younger Vedic writings and among the Buddhists. See A. Webber *Indische Streifen* 1,209 and comp. Brunhofer, *Urgeschichte der Areier* 1,192."

The parallels in younger Vedic texts—man asvak-karma—are tolerably well-known. But especially rich in this formula is Buddhist literature both of the Orthodox Hinayana and the later Mahayana schools. In the Pali Dhammapada we read :

Yassa kayena vacaya manasa natthi dukkatam.
Samvutam tihi thanehi tam aham brumi Brahmanam.

He who commits no sin by body, speech or mind and is restrained in the three respects—him I call a Brahman (I have not at hand the Pali Text Society's edition and quote from the Hanthawaddy Press edition, Burmese character, *Khuddaka-Patha*, p. 36).

There is practically no end to similar passages, see *Sutta-nipata*, *Cullavagga* 11, *Samma-paribbajaniya sutta* 7 ; *Vinaya Maha vagga* vi., 316. *Culla vagga* lv, 14, 6 ; Samyutta Nikaya ii, 1, 4 ; Anguttara Nikaya iii, 18. And this is one of the sacred songs of a Buddhist nun:

Kayena samvuta asim vacaya uda cetasa.

[1] In the same way the religion of Mazda, O, Spitama Zarathushtra! cleanses the faithful from every evil thought, word, and deed as a swift-rushing mighty wind cleanses the plain." S. B. E. IV. 34.

Samulam tanham abbuhya sitibhutamhi nibbuta, which Mrs. Rhys Davids poetically translates:

Well have I disciplined myself in act.

In speech and eke in thought, rapt and intent. Craving with root of craving is overcome; Cool am I now; I know Nirvana's peace (*Psalms of the Sisters,* p. 19).

An eloquent passage of ethical value occurs in the Devaduta suttam of the *Majjhima Nikaya*:

Ambho purisa pamadavataya na kalayanam akasi kayena vacaya manasa; taggha twam, ambho purisa, tatha karissanti yatha tam pamattam. Tam kho panate etam papam kammam n'eva matara katam na pitara katam na bhatara katam na bhaginiya katam na mittamaccehi katam na natisalohitehi katam na samana brahmanehi katam na devatahi katam; taya v'etam papam kammam katam; twm neva tassa vipakam patisam vedissasati—i.e.

O man by your thoughtlessness you did no act of merit by *body, speech or mind.* Verily, O man, they shall treat you according to your thoughtlessness. And this sinful deed of yours was not committed by mother or father or brother or sister or friends or companions, relatives or kinsmen ; neither was it done by Shramanas, Brahmans or gods. By you this sinful act was done and you alone shall experience its fruit.

Among Sanskrit Buddhistic works may be mentioned: *Buddhacaritra* XVI., 25; *Jatakamala* VI., 3, XXI., 40; the *Surhillekha,* Epistle of Nagarjuna to king Udayana (Journal of the Pali Text Society, 1886). It may be noted that the Buddhists regard the formula—body, speech and thought—in the ascending order of gravity, an act of speech being more serious than an act of the body and a thought being the most serious of the three in direct opposition to the doctrine of the Jainas, who also constantly make use of the triad but look upon a sin of thought as less wicked than a sin by speech or deed. According to the Kalpa-sutra " the Venerable Ascetic Mahavira was circumspect in his *thoughts,* circumspect in his *words,*

circumspect in his *acts*; guarding his *thoughts*, guarding his *words*, guarding his *acts*" (see Jacobi S. B. E. XXII., 260). The Jaina order would seem to resemble the Zoroastrian ; the Buddhist formula stands by itself. Whether a thought was more potent than a deed seems to have exercised the minds of both the hostile religions. The Upali sutta of the *Majjhima Nikaya* very interestingly brings out the Buddhist position where the Buddha engages in an intellectual wrestle with a Jain, or Niggantha as the Buddhists called him, defeats and as a matter of course converts him to Buddhism.

There are two other points regarding the usages of the ancient Parsis on which the strong resemblance with Buddhist practices has scarcely been investigated beyond casual notices in more or less inaccessible works. The first is the so-called practice of *khvaetodath* on which Dr. Tiele has the following note:—

" A clear analysis of this problem with the citing of the rich literature on the subject will be found in Darmesteter's *Zend Avesta* 1,126 et seq. He himself is of opinion that the Avesta did not know the later khvaetvadatha-marriage but that it was deduced from it by a certain logical sequence. He is right in rejecting the etymology proposed by Geldner,—*khvaetuvadatha*, which would literally signify kinsfolk marriage (*Etudes iraniennes* 1,137). My conviction expressed above is in accord with that of D. D. P. Sanjana, *Next-of-kin marriage*, London, 1888, of H. Hunschmann " *Uber die persische Verwandtenheirat*" in the Journal of the German Oriental Society xliii, 308 and of others. E. W. West *Pahlavi Texts* (11 S. B. E. xviii 389–430) shows that in the Pahlavi writings the *khvetukdas* was regarded as sacred and that it was certainly reduced to practice. But he concedes (p. 427) that the Parsis are perfectly justified in believing that their religion did not originally sanction the usage. The Avesta passages in question are : Ys. 13, 28, Visp. 3, 18 ; Gah. 4, 8 ; Visht. Yt. 17; Vend 8, 35 is an interpolation."

It will perhaps be held of some importance to indicate that Buddhism here again affords us a curious parallel.[2] It is not contended that the tenets of Buddhism had any connection with the practice but the fact remains that Buddhist works of India testify to the existence of extraordinary conjugal unions such as are not to be met with in Brahmanical or Jain records. And it is a striking fact that while racial bias vitiates much of what the Greek, Byzantine, and Moslem writers have to say about ancient Persia, no such motive can with justice be alleged against Chinese travellers, many of whom have recorded the practice as obtaining in Central Asia. (For perhaps the latest instance added to our knowledge, see Kentok Hori's Chinese account of Persia in the Sixth Century in *Spiegel Memorial Volume*, p. 246.) That Buddhism one time penetrated far into Persia,[3] some of its provinces being divided in worship between Mazda and the Buddha; that colossal images of the Buddha have been discovered at Bamyan ; and that the *patra* or the begging-bowl of the Enlightened One was adored in Balkh are also facts beside the question.[4] But the circumstance again raises the question of the Buddha's nationality. As Minayeff [5] points out in Jataka 20 the tribe of the Koliyas reproach the Shakya clan to which Gotama himself belonged, as having

[2] In Brahmanical scriptures Rig Veda 10, 61, 57 is probably only an allegory, but Atharva Veda 8, 6, 7 and Rig Veda 10, 162, 5 depict reality. Zimmer *Altindesches Leben* p. 333.

[3] Perhaps there is nothing more romantic in the history of religion than the spectacle of a Parthian prince renouncing his throne in A. D. 149 and going to China as a Buddhist monk where he translated parts of the sacred writings. See Edmunds in the *Monist*.

[4] Marquart, *Eranshahr* p. 90. Chavannes, *Documents sur less Tou-kine occidentaux* p. 125. Minayeff, *Recherches sur le Bouddhisme* p. 161, &c. Beal, *Buddhist Records* I, p. 51 ; 55 note.

[5] *Pali Grammar* p. XII. The great Russian scholar was one of the first to note that " even as Zarathushtra struggles with Angramamyes and gains the victory (*mainyush*) over him, so Shakyamuni combats with Mara and destroys his power." The Kunala Jatuka uses nearly identical words with the Mahavastu which points to the high antiquity of the Buddha's family tradition.

sonasigala-dayoviya attano bhaginihi saddhim vasimsu.

In the Pali Dasaratha, Jataka, Rama and Sita appear as brother and sister first and become king and queen later. I would next refer the reader to the *Ambattha sutta* of the *Digha Nikaya* in which the subject of the Buddha's dialogue is the Brahmanic pride of birth and the arrogant assumptions of the Brahmanic caste in general. The young Brahman Ambattha advancing the claims of his caste, says, 'There are these four grades. Gotama, the nobles, the Brahmans, the tradesfolk and the work-people. And of these four, three—the nobles, the tradesfolk and the work-people—are verily but attendants on the Brahmans. So, Gotama, that is neither fitting, nor is it seemly that the Sakyas, menials as they are, should neither venerate, nor value, nor esteem, nor give gifts to, nor pay honour to the Brahmans.' Thus did the young Brahman Ambattha for the third time charge the Sakyas with being menials, runs our *sutta*. Then the Blessed One thought thus: This Ambattha is very set on humbling the Sakyas with his charge of servile origin. What if I were to ask him as to his own lineage. And he said to him: And what family do you then Ambattha belong to? I am a Kanhayana, says the Brahman. Yes, rejoins the Buddha, but if one were to follow up your ancient name and lineage, Ambattha, on the father's and the mother's side, it would appear that the Sakyas were once your masters, and that you are the offspring of one of their slave girls. But the Sakyas trace their line back to Okkaka the King. And the Buddha proceeds to describe the origin of the Sakyas, the clan to which he himself belonged, "Long ago, Ambattha, King Okkaka wanting to divert the succession in favour of the son of his favourite queen, banished his elder children from the land and being thus banished, they took up their dwelling on the slopes of the Himalaya on the borders of a lake where a mighty oak tree grew. And through fear of injuring the purity of their line they intermarried with their sisters."[6] The incident in the Buddha's ancestry so briefly

[6] Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, p. 115.

allude dto, by the Buddha himself according to the canonical text, is enlarged upon by the commentator Buddhaghosa in his *Sumangala Vilasini* where the banished princes on the same grounds of preserving the purity of their blood declare their resolve: *tasma mayam bhaginihi yeva saddhim samvasam karomati* ; so that finally *te jati-sam bheda bhayena jettham bhaginim matitthane thapetva avasesabhi samvasam kappesum.*[7]

The history of the origin of the Sakyas as given in the Pali works is confirmed by Sanskrit Buddhist texts, and we read in the *Mahavastu* that कुमारेहि जातिसंदोषभयेन स्वकस्वकेयेव मातृयी भगिनीयो परस्परस्य विवाहितायो मामो जातिसंदोषम् भविष्यतीति.[8]

The custom of consanguinous marriages among the Burmese Buddhist kings has also to be noted in this connection.[9]

A third point of similarity furnished by Buddhist writers consists in the peculiar system of the disposal of the dead by at least some Indian tribes who professed Buddhism, a system partaking of the Parsi mode of exposure. The same *Therigatha* to which we referred above—observe that the term *gatha* is used by the Buddhists in well nigh the same sense of religious poetry—would appear to furnish instances of such practice.[10] In the *Udana* the story of Bahiyo Daruciriyo is instructive. The latter, after receiving precepts from the Master, meets with his death by an accident—an accident curiously not uncommon in the Pali Pitakas—being killed by a wandering cow. His body apparently lay exposed when the Buddha directed that it should be cremated and a *stupa* erected over the ashes. *a*

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[7] *Sumangala Vilasini* ed. Pali Text Society, Part i, p. 260.

[8] See Senart's ed. Vol. i., p. 351. Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 12.

[9] Father Sangermano's *Burmese Empire*, p. 69.

[10] *Psalms of the Sisters*, pp. 80, 107, 109, 191.

a "And when it lies dead swollen and livid discarded in the cemetery relatives do not care for it. Dogs eat it and jackals, wolves and worms; crows and vultures eat it, and what other living creatures there are."

Vijayasutta in the *Suttanipatta*.

That in India itself besides the usual cremation ground there were special places for the disposal of the dead resembling the *Parsi Towers of Silence* is reported to us by Buddhist writers. The *amaka susana*, as Childers defines it in his Pali dictionary, was "a cemetery where the bodies were not burnt but left to rot." The *sivathika* was "a charnel-house where dead bodies were thrown to rot away instead of being burned." The Pali Jataka book furnishes us with instances of this peculiar mode of the disposal of the dead. They are so frequent that the practice they illustrate must have been as familiar to the authors as any of the other ancient usages to which they testify. The practice has been noted by Professor Rhys Davids in his *Buddhist India* (p. 80), and the striking comparison with the Parsi Towers of Silence has occurred to the English translator Chalmers (Vol. i, 2.5). "The disposal of the dead was," writes Rhys Davids with reference to Buddhist India "in some respects very curious. Deceased persons of distinction, either by birth or wealth or official position or as public teachers were cremated. But the dead bodies of ordinary people were disposed of in a unique way. They were put away in a public place. There, as a rule, the bodies or the remains of the pyre were not buried but left to be destroyed by birds or beasts or dissipated by the process of natural decay." The mention of vultures too is not wanting in this connection : *tasmin kale Baranasi susane eko nesado gijjhanam pase oddesi* (Gijjha Jataka). The Maha-sutasoma Jataka is the gruesome tale of how a king's cook finding the meat supply of the day spoilt by a palace dog was at his wits' end, knowing that certain death awaited him if he served the king with a flesh-less meal, and

Similar stanzas on the worthlessness of the body which, by the way, point to the mode of the disposal of the dead, occur in the Jataka 12, which was, no doubt, a popular favourite, as it is sculptured on the Bharhut Stupa, and is to be found in Northern replicas.

Sace imassa kayassa anto bahirato siya
dandam nuna gahetvana kake sone ca varaye

occurs in "a long string of repulsive stanzas" omitted by the Translator Jataka 1, 37.

how he made up for the loss by substituting "flesh from the thigh of a man who had just died" and whose body lay exposed in the cemetery.

For modern times we have the direct testimony of travellers that disposal of the dead by exposure is the rule, and cremation and burial exceptions in the Buddhist countries of Mongolia and Tibet.[11]

Again, the whole legend of Mara and Buddha irresistibly reminds one of Angra Mainyu and Zoroaster, the struggle, the temptation, the triumph, of the good principle over the evil.[12]

This from *Dhammapada* has quite a Zoroastrian ring about it.

" Kinsmen, friends and lovers salute a man who has been long away and returns safe from afar. In like manner his good works receive him who has done good and has gone from this world to the other ;—as kinsmen receive a friend on his return." *a*

[11] See the extremely interesting *Etudes sur l'historie religieuse del'Iran* of Blochet and the authorities cited, Blochet demonstrates the original of the Mongolian Khormuzd to be Hormazd.

Exposure of the dead . . . is practised to this day in Tibet and was in ancient times the usage of the Licchavis of Vaisall (who were Buddhists); see also *Indian Antiquary*, 1903, p. 233—*The Early History of India* by Smith, p. 136.

[12] See *Mara und Buddha* by Windisch where, however, the author thinks more of the Christian parallel.

Many works dealing with the resemblances between Buddhism and Christianity incidentally refer to Parsiism. Seydel's *Evangelium von Jesu in seinen Verhaltnissen zu Buddha-sage und Buddha-Lehre*, especially, p. 306. Senart, *Legende du Buddha*, pp. 197, 306, 239. Of great value are the two volumes of Edmunds on *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*. Edmunds, with the help of his friend Anesaki, the Japanese scholar, informs us of the Parthian princely converts to Buddhism, some of whom translated a large number of Buddhist works into Chinese. Vol. i, 68.

a The vague "kinsmen" of the Buddhist takes the definite shape of a beautiful maiden in the Avesta :

"At the end of the third night it seems to the soul of the faithful one as if his own conscience were advancing to him in the shape of a maiden fair, bright, white armed, strong, talled-formed, thick-breasted, beautiful of body, noble, as fair as the fairest of things in the world.

"What maid art thou, who art the, fairest maid I have ever seen ?"

"O thou youth of good thoughts, good words and good deeds, of good religion, I am thy own conscience," (Yasht 22-7-11.)

The entire method of the *pucchas* and *paripuchas* ("questions" and "inquiries") to which so many sections are devoted in Buddhist literature—anxious outsiders making inquiries of the Buddha—call to our mind our own Pahlavi *purseshnihas*.[13] And "Thee I ask, answer me aright, Mazda," has its counterpart in solemn adjurations like "I ask thee, O Bhagvat, tell me this (*Sutta-Nipata Nanadamanavapuccha* 3). Even the militant spirit of aggressive Zoroastrianism finds the fullest expression against the Evil One in the sacred books of the Buddhists, especially the *Marasamyutta* with its repeated burden of "struck down art thou, O Evil One."

In the *Saddharmapundarika*, the Tathagata, addressing Shariputra, prophesies: "The true law will, after his extinction, last thirty-two intermediate kalpas, and the counterfeit of his true law will last as many intermediate kalpas," and the expression *pratirupaka* for counterfeit "reminds one of the counterfeit *paitiyaro* produced by Ahriman in opposition to the creation of Ormazd." Kern is of opinion that there is no doubt about the connection between the Buddhistical and the Iranian expressions.[14]

The very name Ormazd has been borrowed by the Turanian Buddhists to connote their highest deity as, I believe, Blochet was the first* to show. It is very surprising, however, that the learned translator of the recently discovered Buddhist sutra Tishastvustic in Central Asia does not seem to find any analogy between the Iranian godhead and "Hormuzd the god of gods" to whom the Buddha reveals this sutra.[15]

[13] In the Pali Buddhism the *Sutta Nipata* furnishes the best known instances; in Sanskrit the *Rashtrapala-pariprucchа*, ed Finot (Petersburg). The *Mahavyutpatti* regards *pariprucchа* as one of the four modes of vyakarana or exposition. Vol. i, p. 29.

[14] S. B. E. XXI, p. 68 note.

* Schmidt seems to have anticipated him, see Spiegel *Trad. Literatur d. Parsen*, 43

[15] *Ein in Turkischer Spraehe bearbeitetes Buddhisches Sutra* by Radloff and Stael-Holstein (St. Petersburg), 1910. This important work is typical of the avoidable Babel which Western philologists seem unfortunately determined

There is little doubt that the Indian Buddhists came in close touch with the Iranians, or at least some tribe among them noted for their rigorous observance of the duty of destroying noxious creatures as inculcated by the *Vendidad*. This trait distinguished the Kambojas from all other peoples known to the Indian Buddhists. And we cannot but consequently see in the Kambojas of the Pali literature an Iranian people. They were famous for the fine breed of their horses, then as now, and throughout their long history. This is how they are characterised in the *Bhuridatta*-Jataka, (ed. Fausboll VI, 208.)

Kita patanga uraga ca bheka
hantva kimim sujjhati makkhika ca
ete hi dhamma anariyarupa
Kambojakanam vitatha bahunnan.[16]

to create in their otherwise fascinating field of marvellous investigations. The original text is in the, up to now, almost unknown Uigurian, which the Russian scholars have made accessible to us through a German translation, but the transliteration is in Russian character and the interesting notes on the Brahmi gloss are made unserviceable to the average student of Buddhism by the introduction of two sets of unknown alphabets besides Chinese, Arabic [and Nagari scripts. The Eastern students, however, must be grateful to the Imperial Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, for the employment of the Nagari character in the publication of its admirable series of *Bibliotheca Buddhica*.

Professor Sylvain Levi has been the first to point to a reference to the Shakyas in Hemacandra

Turushkas tu Shakyah syuh (V. 959.)

So after all the Shakya clan to which the Buddha belonged may have been a non-Indian Turanian tribe. In the Mahabharata, as the same scholar shows, the Shakyas are spoken of along with the Yavanas and also are associated with the Pahlavas. *Notes sur es Indo-Scythes*, p. 51.

Referring to the struggle of Mara with the Buddha, which so strongly resembles the conflict between the two opposing powers in Zoroastrianism, Spence Hardy believes that "there can be no doubt, that the whole history of this battle was at first an allegorical description of an enlightened mind struggling with the power of evil." Manual of Buddhism, p. 175.

It is impossible to exaggerate the value of Lloyd's "*Wheat among the Tares*" for a comparative study of Buddhism and Parsiism;—Buddha engaged in controversy with Persian Fire-worshippers (p. 92). The loss of Lloyd's larger work by fire is much to be regretted.

[16] Those men are counted pure who only kill frogs, worms, bees, snakes or insects as they will. These are your savage customs which I hate, such as Kamboja hordes might emulate. (Translation, Vol. VI, 110.)

It has often been alleged that there could be no community of thought or ideals between the Buddha and Zoroaster, the former being a transcendant philosopher and the strictest vegetarian imaginable, and the latter a mere practical man of commonsense.[17] The preposterous claim that the Buddha was an abhorer of animal food needs no serious refutation. I have elsewhere collected abundant testimony to show that either it was a fact that the Buddha was a habitual meat-eater or that the huge mass of Pali Buddhistic literature does not represent genuine Buddhism. Add to the numerous citations from the Pali canon in Dr. Otto Schrader's essay "*On Ahimsa and Vegetarianism mainly in Buddhism*" contributed to the *Ceylon National Review* (January 1910.)

Puttadaram pi ce hantva deti danam a-annato
bhunjamano pi sappanno na papena upalippati

(Jataka, ed. Fausboll II, 263, and see the ancient scholion on the gatha there.)[18]

The sacred character and the medicinal virtue of cow's urine are not unknown to Buddhism, but it seems that all the schools of Buddhism were not at one in this respect. For, while the *Mahavagga* (i., 30, 4) prescribes that "the religious life has decomposing urine as medicine for its resource" one sect, whose tenets are familiarised to us by the Chinese traveller Itsing, prohibits the use of urine. (Note in passing that it is urine in general and not cow's urine in particular that is spoken of in Buddhism.)

[17] See Oldenberg's *Aus Indien und Iran*, p. 159: as Zarathushtra, so the Buddha, each to his disciples was the supreme man yet nothing but human.

[18] The *Madhyamakavrtti* (p. 317), a Mahāyana work, speaks of a book in which our evil acts are registered in the spiritual world like debts in a banker's ledger here below—quite in the spirit of later Parsi belief. The researches of Professor L. de la Vallee Poussin, editor of the *Vritti*, who occupies himself not with any one sect of Buddhism, but pronounces at once with authority on every phase of the remarkable religion of the Buddha, whether preserved to us in Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan or Chinese documents, cannot be overestimated; see pp. 69, 330, &c., of his *Boudhisme: Opinions sur l'histoire de la dogmatique*.

No one who has studied the Zoroastrian doctrine of the *Saoshyants* or the coming saviour-prophets can fail to see their resemblance to the future Buddha Maitreya. "We are perhaps justified in pointing out the striking similarity of the representation of the coming Maitreya with Saoshyant, the deliverer in the Parsi religion. Even though we do not know when the legend of Saoshyant received the development it now presents still the dominant position of Maitreya in the northern school must have been influenced by it (*Buddhist Art*, p. 190, Grunwedel-Burgess.) How much Buddhism and, incidentally, Indian culture in general, especially architecture, has been influenced by Achaemedide Persia must be patent to the readers of these celebrated authorities. The whole doctrine of the Dhyani-Buddhas and Dhyanibodhisattvas appears to rest on the Zoroastrian theory of the *Fravashis*" (p. 195). In some Buddhist sculptures the Sun-god is represented as wearing a distinct girdle, the *avyanga* (Avesta: *aivyaongha*).

Valuable material for a comparative study of the religions of the Buddha and Zoroaster, especially as regards the origins of the former in so far as they are not traceable to the indigenous Indian schools of Sankhya and Yoga will be available, in Father Weiger's *Buddhisme Chinois*, who sees the antecedent factors of Buddhism partly in "Indo-Iranian Mazdaism."

As indicated above, the temptation of the Buddha by Mara offers a close analogy to the temptation of Zarathushtra by Angra Mainyu. Perhaps the most striking part of both the legends is the enigmas propounded by the Evil One to the Good Spirit. The Parsi Vendidad 19, 4, speaks of riddles in this connection exactly as does the Buddhist *Suciloma sutta* of the *Sutta Nipata*.

"A man is born who is a chief in assemblies and meetings, who listens well to the holy words, whom wisdom holds dear and who returns a victor from discussions with *Gaotema* the heretic." Who is this Gaotema of the well known sixteenth sentence of the *Farvardin Yasht*? Dr. Tiele and a number of

scholars who have investigated the passage in connection with the age[19] of the Avesta, will not admit that there is any reference here to Gotama the Buddha. Still the name remains very striking, and the importance of the passage cannot be diminished by two more which I cite from the same *Yasht*. In the 41st section of this same *Farvardin Yasht*, Zarathushtra is called "the head of the *bipeds*." This expression at once reminds one of the characteristic epithets of the Buddha—*dvipadottama* and its synonyms (see, *e. g.*, *Lalitavistara*, p. 167). Darmesteter has already noted in section 89 of the same Yasht the important phrase "the turning of the wheel." In the English translation (S. B. E. XXIII, 201) he refers to *Mihir Yasht* 67, and rightly observes that the "expression smacks of Buddhism." And it is obvious that a strong case would be made out for the resemblance if the text was fixed and offered no variants. But this unfortunately is not the case. Darmesteter himself chooses the reading *cithra* and not *cakhra* in his Guimet translation and renders "*qui le premier detourna le visage*," and only in a footnote tells us that the reading *cakhrem* would give "who turned the wheel." (*Le Zend-Avesta* II, 528.) In *Mihir Yasht* he prefers the reading *rathwya-cakhra* (*ibid* p. 400). Geldner's standard text gives *rathwya-cithra* in *Mihir Yasht* and *cithrem* in *Farvardin Yasht* (p. 139, p. 187 *Avesta*). Wolff, whose latest translation of the sacred books of the Parsis is entirely based on Bartholomae's Lexicon, ignores the reading *cakhra* in both passages (*Avestadie heiligen bucher der Persen*, pp. 208, 242.) On the other hand, Kanga's Gujarati version, which no doubt represents the traditional interpretation, is in both cases based on the reading *cakhra* which he himself adopts, though he neither adduces the rival readings nor hints at the Buddhistic similarity (*Yasht ba maeni*, pp. 96 and 215). It may be permissible to

[19] Blochet's rejoinder to Tiele and Max Muller and also to J. J. Modi in his *Avesta de J. Darmesteter et ses critiques* does not seen to have attracted the attention it deserves. Pahlavi *butasp* is only the Sanskrit *bodhisattva* (p. 27).

hazard one's opinion that that Zarathushtra "turned the wheel against the daevas" would suit the text better than that he "turned away his face from them."

There is one chapter in the small remnant extant of the once extensive Parsi scriptures which comes much nearer to the spirit of Buddhism than any other one can think of,—the *Aogamaide*. The opening words are sufficiently arresting at least in the light of the native Pazand commentary: "I come into this world, I accept evil, I resign myself to death," for "there comes a day, O Spitama Zarathushtra, or a night when the master leaves the cattle, or the cattle leave the master, or the soul leaves that body full of desires." The everlasting fount of all human misery is nescience *(avijja)* as taught by Buddhism, and our Iranian sermon has it that "it is ignorance that ruins people, the ill-informed." The inexorable ruthlessness of the demon of death is expatiated upon in resonant lines which are like echoes of the haunting descriptions of cemeteries in Pali writings:

Pairithvo bavaiti pantao
yim azhis paiti gau stavao
aspangadho viranghadho
viraja anamarezdiko
hau did aevo apairithvo
yo vayaos anamarezdikahe

"You can journey along the road that is guarded by a snake large as an ox that devours horse or man, the pitiless, but one road you cannot traverse—the path of pitiless Vayu."

Harlez[20] thinks of Christian influences here, but one is more inclined to perceive a Buddhist vein of thought in the utter helplessness of all material creation in the presence of death and decay.

Pansus gavo, pansus aspa
pansus erezatem zaranim
pansus naro ciryo takhmo.
Dust is the ox, dust is the horse
Dust are silver and gold,
Dust is the hero, valiant and bold.

[20] Journal Asiatique, Aug-Sept. 1878. Geiger's *Aogemadacca* ein Parsentractat in Pazend; also S. B. E. IV, 372, and *The Zend-Avesta* III, 154.

Healing by the holy word is common to both the systems of religion. The incantations of the Vendidad have their counterparts in a number of places in the Tipitaka (Khuddaka-Patho translated by Karl Seidenstucker, who is the first to dissipate all doubts as to the genuineness of this portion of the Pali Buddhism which, as he shows, has its exact parallel in the Buddhism of Japan, p. 35). Medical efficacy of the sacred text is specifically insisted on in the Sutralamkara. "To cure the maladies of the body or the mind, there is nothing but the words of the Buddha" (Huber, p. 213).

There is a prevision of the future, of the sad times to come, in the sacred books of both Iran and Buddhist India. The horrors of the evil days of the *Bahman Yasht* (S. B. E., V. 191) and the *Jamaspi* (Ed. Modi) are comparable to the *anagata bhayani*, the future troubles, of the *Samyutta* (II, 208 ff) and the *Anguttara* (III, 105).

THE INFLUENCE OF PARSISM ON ISLAM.

BY PROFESSOR I. GOLDZIHER.

(*Translated by G. K. Nariman.*)

For long we have been content with the convenient assertion: Islam has sprung up all of a sudden full into broad daylight.

The more we proceed with critical examination of the oldest documents of Islam, the more we are convinced that the Musalman tradition, *hadith*, which chronologically is, after the Qoran, the most ancient source of our information, does not carry us up to the early infancy of Islam except in a very feeble way.[1] It often rather presents us with conflicting tendencies.

In utilising the rich material of this tradition in which the Moslems find documents corroborating their sacred book we must go far beyond the critical method which the Musalman school has practised in a rational manner since the second century of the *hijira*.

We have become more strict and more circumspect with regard to this literature. No one who is seriously engaged in Islamic studies would venture to borrow at hazard from this source the maxims attributed to Muhammad and his companions for the purpose of drawing a picture of the ancient state of affairs and the primitive doctrines of Islam. The modern historical critic puts us on our guard against this antedeluvian fashion. The struggles of the political and religious parties make these documents intelligible to us—the aspirations which this or that saying of Muhammad or this or that information regarding a companion of the Prophet must have served to support or combat.

While we occupy ourselves with the evolution of Islam due to internal forces we have at the same time to direct our attention

[1] Snouck Hurgronje in *Litteraturblatt fur Orientalische Philologe* 1884).

to the foreign influences which had a determining importance on the formation and development of Islam.

Every elementary manual of the history of the middle ages teaches us that from its first beginning Islam was subject to Jewish and Christian influences and that Muhammad himself worked upon the data of the Jews and Christians. These influences continued to assert themselves in a positive or negative manner even during the first generations which came after the death of the Prophet. The intervention of Jewish and Christian elements have always been admitted in Islam without acknowledgment.[2] Yet the usages of the Jews and Christians were repudiated. They were discarded and reaction set up against them. The common formula of the time is *Khālifuhum*,—" distinguish yourselves from them." This reaction itself must be considered as a symptom of the spiritual relationship and of intimate influence.

Upto now little attention has been directed to one of the most important elements in the religious development of Islam, the Persian element. It has exercised under the dual form of loan and reaction a determining influence on the formation of the character of Islam. The influence of Parsism on Islam is one of the first questions which will suggest itself to any one occupied with our subject of study. To be adequately treated it requires a knowledge equally profound of the Persian and the Musalman religions. M. Blochet is the only one who upto now has broached the question in some of the articles published in the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* and who has furnished important materials for the solution of the problem.[3] I take the liberty to single out in particular from the standpoint of philology, quite as much as that of the science of religions, the excellent study in which he has shown the Persian origin

[2] *Muhammedanische Studien* 11, 382-400 : *Hadith und Neues Testament.*

[3] *Revue des Etudes Juives*, XXVIII, 75 f.

of the Musalman conception of Borak, the winged horse on which the Prophet has been supposed to have accomplished his ascension.*

One of the most fascinating chapters of the history of civilization consists in investigating the varied influences which the Sasanian civilization has exercised on different sections of humanity geographically separated from one another. Even in the language and the artistic monument of the nation to which I belong we may observe remarkable traces of this influence. Since the times of the migrations of the ancient Hungarians before they penetrated into the regions limited by the Karpathian mountains we have continued to employ upto this day, to confine myself to religious nomenclature, words borrowed from Persia to designate God, namely Isten, Persian Izadan ; the devil or dog, Persian druj ; and in profane usage devaj, wanton, is a remnant of daeva. Our archæologists and the historians of our art discover from time to time fresh vestiges of Persian elements in the ancient monuments of our art.

A similar influence on Arabism lies on the surface. It was the immediate and permanent contact with Sasanian culture which gave to the Arabs, who were solely confined to poetry, the first impulse which permitted the expansion of a deeper intellectual life. I adhere for instance to my thesis which has been accepted by Professor Brockelmann in his History of Arab Literature that the writing of history on part of the Arabs has its roots in the literature of the royal annals of the Persians, that there would be no Arab historians if the first impulse had not been received by Arab litterateurs from Persia, and that it was this impulse which led them to make researches and preserve the historic memory of their own nation.[5] The ante-Islamian Arabs were devoid of all sense of history. Their memory of the most ancient events does not go beyond the sixth Christian century, save for the traditions

V, XXXVIII and XL of the Revue.

[5] Brockelmann: *Geschite der Arabischen Litteratur* I, p. 134.

regarding the migrations of the southern tribes of Arabia towards the north. The events of the nearest past were veiled to them and floated in the clouds of myths.

It was contact with Persian culture, contact which goes back to the remotest period of Islam, which decided the direction and the end of the development of the intellectual life of the Arabs.[6]

The action of the Persian element on the religious formation was very far-reaching as soon as Islam had established itself in the geographical regions of ancient Parsism and had carried to the worshippers of Zoroaster, with the aid of the sword, the faith of the Prophet of Mecca and Medina. The occupation of Irak by the Musalmans constitutes one of the most decisive factors in the religious formation of Islam.

Persian theologians introduced into the religion lately adopted their traditional points of view. The conquerors enriched the poverty of their own fundamentals by elements procured for them by the experience of a profoundly religious way of life, the way of the Persians whom they had defeated. That is why we cannot attach too much importance for the formation of Islam to the intellectual movement which was born in Irak and which was connected with the schools of Basra and Kufa. There is no room for surprise if this local development carried in its current many a Persian element.[7]

These influences attained to their complete extent of development when the Musalman state underwent the great revolution about the year 128 of its era and the house of the Umayyads fell from power to give place to the Abbasides. It was not merely the political overthrow of a dynasty. It was a religious revolution. It was a momentous religious upheaval. In place of the mundane government of the Umayyads who

[6] Khalif Usman invited at his Court the Christian Abu Zubeid Harmala ibn Mundhir who had, before the appearance of the Prophet, "visited the Kings of Persia and new their manners," *min zuwwar al muluk wa khassatan muluk al ajam wa kana aliman bi siyarihim.*" Aghani xi p. 24.

[7] Cp. Blochet, R. H. R. xxxviii, p. 447.

had conserved the Arab traditions in their residence at Damascus on the borders of the desert, the theocratic regime of the Abbasides founded a power on principles at once political and ecclesiastical. They fixed their residence at Anbar and at Bagdad, the centre of the Sasanide kingdom which Islam had subverted. They adopted the traditions of the Sasanides. Their title was no longer that of an Arab Shaikh; it was that of king of Persia. They based their authority on the principle of legitimacy as "children of the Prophet" exactly as in the Sasanian times the Persian power was reared on legitimacy. Like the Sasanides, the Abbasides set themselves to restore the religion fallen into ruins under their predecessors. Their kingdom was an ecclesiastical state. They themselves were not secular chieftains but religious heads. They considered themselves, so to say, Baghi, divine, like the Sasanides; for the latter represented themselves as such on their coins.[8]

In their entourage, there was a perfect consciousness of the relation between the new institution of the Khalifs and the conception of Persian kingship. While the Abbaside Khalif Abdul Malek censured the poet at his court for employing the attributes of a Persian king in glorifying him—it was only a matter of the term diadem, taj,[9]—an Abbaside prince and poet thus celebrates the Khalif in a historic poem dedicated to him: "He resembles the Persian Ardeshir when he restored a destroyed kingdom."[10] This restoration was linked from the first with the idea now formed of the dignity of Khalif. Not only

[8] Journal Asiatique 1895, 1, p. 167 ; Zeitschrift der d. Morhenl. Ges xxi (1867), p. 429, 458, J. Darmesteter *Coup d'oeil sur l'histoire de la Perse*,* (Paris 1885), p. 40, Sacred Books of the East, XXIV, p. 171.

[9] Aghani iv, 158.

Cp Bratke *Religions gesprach am Hohe der Sassaniden* 193, note 1, in the eyes of the Arabs the taj was the characteristic attribute of the Persian royal dignity, cp Noeldeke *Funf Mullakat* 1, 36, about Anr Ibn Kulthum Legends were composed about the taj of Khushru (Ibn Hisham, p. 42, 4).

[10] Diwan or Abdullah al-Mutazz I, p. 128, 15. This poem was published separately by M. Lang in Z. D. M. G. for 1886, p. 563.

* See p. 180 of this book, Tr.

their Court, their administrative organisation, the system of the offices of state and the etiquette were in conformity with the model of the Persian Empire, the intrinsic signification of khalifat came to be formulated after the Persian ideal: they were the guardians of divine economy, the state turned into a religious institution, a universal church at the head of which the legitimate successor of the Prophet, the "Khalif Allah" found himself. Highest consideration was secured for the church by the state. A government truly worthy of the name must be in accord with religion; government is related to religion, thanks to the perfect union with it; hence one may say that government and religion are identical and that religion is the government of the people.[11] These are entirely Musalman maxims. And the book from which they are extracted is not by a Musalman legislator but is a Pahlavi book, the Dinkard, dating from the last days of productive Parsism.

The Moslem idea of theocracy was born in Persian atmosphere and in its application and practical effect, it breathed the spirit of Persian tradition. In place of confessional indifference which dominated the Umayyads, it was confessionalism which became the guiding principle of government under the Abbasides. The Umayyads treated with sovereign contempt the theologians who attempted to thwart[12] them; the Abbasides made the dogma their special care. They inaugurated their rule by enforcing and preserving the *sunna* in government and they ended by persecuting the heretics and those who differed from them in thought. I will content myself with the mention of their persecution of the Zendiks,[13] as the heretics were called after the Persian vogue, and who soon after the accession of the Abbasides to power became victims of a kind of Moslem inquisition.[14]

[11] Justi, *Geschite des alten Persiens* (Berlin 1879). As regards Persian political doctrines, cp. Wilhelm, *Konigthum und Priesterthum im alten Eran*, Z.D.M G., 1886, p. 102.

[12] *Muhammedanischen Studien* II, p. 132.

[13] *Actes du XI Congress des Orientalistes*, third section, p. 70, note 3.*

[14] Transactions of the 11th Congress of Orientalists.

* See p. 135 Tr.

"God has girded the Abbasides with two swords, one for the defence and extension of the frontiers of the state, the other for the assertion of the faith in its dogmatic aspect and to chastise infidelity and heresy."[15] The Persian distinction of *beh-din*[16] and *bad-din*, good creed and bad creed, became a vital principle of Islam. It did not appertain to the original Arab movement which found its continuance in the confessional indifferentism of the Umayyads.

If the Persian influence manifested itself in the transformation of the entire public spirit of Islam it has also left vestiges in certain matters of legal detail.

Without going so far as to maintain with the great master of Persian philology, Frederic Spiegel[17], that the very roots of Moslem tradition, the fundamental form of its religious precepts, plunge into Parsism, we cannot but recognise in our study of the Hadith the Persian ingredient in several peculiarities of its contents.

It does not suffice for us to weigh the importance which Irak the classic land of ancient Persian culture enjoyed. We have equally to consider the part taken by the populace of this country in the development of the spirit of Islam,— their fathers were still faithful followers of the religion of Zoroaster and they introduced into the new confession all the piety of Parsism.

It may not interest the general reader to have the details of a series of analogies between the religious and ritualistic peculiarities of the Moslem traditional literature and the prescriptions of the Persian religion. The chapter concerning purity and impurity from the point of view of ritual, in so far as it did not concern the ancient pagan *taboos* which survived in Islam, saw the light of day under the influence of the religious notions of Persia.

The Persian idea, which is likewise found in Judaism, of the defilement attaching to the dead body is well known. I will

[15] *Wiener Zeitschrift fur die kunde des Morgen lxiii*, 1899 p. 325, note 3.
[16] Spiegel *Die Traditionelle Literateur der Parsenii*, p. 78.
[17] Loc. cit. p. 174.

simply cite the following passage as an instance of Moslem reaction, from the *Hadith*.

"A client of the Ansarian, Abu Wahwah relates: We had washed a corpse. Then we wanted to purify ourselves by a bath. But Abu Wahwah came forward and said, by God, we are not defiled, neither as living nor as dead."[18]

This is an illustration of the opposition to the infiltration of Persian usages among the Arabs. We will now produce some instances of the abiding Parsi influence on Islam at a period subsequent to Muhammad's.

From very remote times in Islam only the reciting of the sacred texts, particularly the Qoran, passed for an act of religious merit. There is no question of prayers or religious formulæ. It is the reading personal or by others of the Revealed Book or large portions from it that are necessary. Now those who are acquainted with Musalman literature must have often read at the close of the commentary on each *surat*, notes on the merits and the reward earned by reciting a separate chapter or the whole of the Qoran.[19] This idea of the merit acquired by the reading of the text is an echo of the Persian belief in the merit of reciting the Vendidad. "A short Yasna as well as the long Vendidad-sadeh serves for being read in the interests of any individual either dead, who by it secures the remission of his sins, or alive, for whom it serves the same end. For as it is not possible for a man to live on the earth without committing a sin, it is necessary to have read the Vendidad from time to time to be relieved of the demerits."[20] And now the recital of his sacred Book would secure for the Musalman the same results for the salvation of his soul. Just like the Parsis, the reading of the holy Book is practised by the Musalmans for several days after the death of the member of a family. In our own days we observe this custom of *kiraye* in

[18] *Usd al ghaiba* v. p. 320.

[19] *Muhammedanischen Studien* ii, 156.

[20] Spiegel, *Eranische Alterthumskunde* 111, 577.

Musalman families at a condolence visit. The Persian origin of the practice will be confirmed by reference to M. Soderblom's work on the Fravashis in connection with the Parsi feast the dead.[21]

I have on another occasion shown how severely Musalman ethics condemn expressions of mourning for the dead. I will not reproduce the sentences of the Prophet in which this idea is indicated. I will call attention to the striking resemblance offered by Parsism on this point.

The eschtological doctrine of the *mizan* or balance among the Moslems for the purpose of weighing the good and bad actions of a man after his death is borrowed from Parsism (Prof. William Jackson has shown the Aryan origin of this idea)[22]. Just as in the sacred books of the Parsis,[23] the value of the good and bad deeds is calculated in Islam[24] as so many units in weight. "One *kintar* of good deeds shall be counted to his credit who reads a thousand verses of the Qoran in a night."[25] The Prophet says: "Whoever says a prayer (salat al-janaza) over the bier of the dead earns a *kirat* but whoso is present at the ceremony till the body is interred merits two kirats of which one is as heavy as the Mount Chod."[26] "The lesser purification *wudu* (such as one performs before saying the prayers) is equivalent to a *mudd*, the complete purification, ghusl, is valued at a *Sa*."[27] The prayer in congregation has twenty-five times higher value than individual prayer." And so al-Muzani, a distinguished pupil of the Imam al-Shafi, one of the principal authorities of the second century, used to say

[21] R. H. R. xxix, 241.

[22] Actes du xth Congressa des Orientalistes. Second part, p. 67.

[23] Spiegel Traditionelle Literateur der Parsenii, p. 87.

[24] Blochet in R. H. R. x l, 232, note 2.

[25] Al Darimi, Sunan p. 440. Al Shaibani, disciple of Abu Hanifa relates (Athar ed. Lahore p. 93) that the reading of each word of the Qoran is equivalent to six good works. The formula ALM of which each letter has a separate value counts alone for thirty.

[26] Usd al ghaiba, l, p. 172.

[27] *Ibid.* v. 586.

twenty-five individual prayers whenever he chanced not to join us in the common devotions.[28] When a pious soul emigrates from Mecca to Jerusalem, he is aware that he loses three quarters of the value of his prayers; a prayer at Mecca being equal to 10,000 ordinary ones, while one said at Jerusalem was worth only 25,000 times more.[29] Similarly, one is liable to lose the quantity of merit acquired. "Whoever has a dog in his house, if it be not a shepherd dog, has his *bona opera* diminished each day by two kirat."[30] We find here without difficulty the Parsi calculation of good and evil acts by weight and measure. "Each step taken in going along with a dead body is a good deed of the value of 300 *stir* : each *stir* is worth 4 *dirhem* so that the 300 *stir* are equal in value to 1,200 dirhem,"[31] "To walk one step without the sacred girdle is an offence amounting to a *farman*, four steps to a *tanavar*."[32] (A *tanavar* is equal to 1,200 dirhem).

The figure 33 plays an important part in Parsi ritual as has been shown by Darmesteter.[33] Compare a parallel position in the Musalman tradition. I purposely refer but to the most ancient hadith. Thirty-three angels carry the praise of man to heaven. Whenever sacred litanies are referred to we find the mention of 33 *tasbih*, 33 *tahmid*, 33 *takbir* and so on [34] —a number which is still to be met with in the litanies of certain mystical Moslem communities.[35] The faith has 333 paths[36] and when the faithful makes his genuflection at prayers 333 bones and 333 nerves exalt the Deity.[37]

[28] Ibn Khallikan led. Wustenfeid No. 92.
[29] Mujir al-din, al-Ins al jalil, p. 263.
[30] Al Damiri Hayat al haywanii, 101.
[31] Sad-der, xii, 8.
[32] *Ibid* lixxxii, 2.
[33] Le Zendavesta, I, p. 13, note 36.
[34] Muwatta, I, p. 81 ; Al Bukhari Fadail ul ashab No. 10.
[35] Dupont et Coppolani, Les Confreries religieuses musulmanes (Algiers 1897), p. 323.
[36] Kut al kulub, I, p. 83.
[37] Al Darakutni apud al Balawi, Alif-Ba, I, p. 371.

I will now proceed to two instances, one of the greatest importance the other of perhaps the least significance, from the standpoint of religion, of Iranian influence on Islam.

The first is the Musalman institution of prayer, the homage which the slave of God renders in prostrating himself in dust before the *rabb-al-alamin*, the Lord of all the worlds. The *number* of the daily devotional repetitions, which have their germs in Judo-Christian influence, certainly goes back to a Persian origin. Prayer as instituted by Muhammad himself was originally fixed for two parts in the day. Latterly a third was added (still in the Qoran), for a third portion of the day which Muhammad himself called the middle (al-wusta). Thus the morning prayer, the evening prayer, and the middle one corresponded to the shakharith, minkhah and arbith of Judaism.

But when the religious institutions of the Parsis penetrated more and more into the circle of the founders of the Musalman rites this was no more sufficient. The Moslem would not remain behind time in comparison with the adepts of Parsism. The five *gahs* of the Persians, their five times of prayers, were borrowed, as Darmesteter has already seen,[38] by the followers of the Prophet, and henceforth the Moslem prayers were not three but five in a day.[39]

The second point is as I said insignificant from the standpoint of religion but is important as being a direct loan from Persia. It is the tooth-brush. One would hardly believe the amount of religious virtue attributed to this object by Musalman tradition. The pious pilgrims are recommended to bring back with them these sanctifying tooth-sticks from the holy places of the Islam.[40] The quantity of ancient passages denoting the great value attached by primitive Islam to the *miswak* offers a bewildering choice.

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[38] Chantes populaires des Afghans, p. 261.

[39] See my remarks on 'Mahometisme' of M. Carra de Vaux (Z.D.M.G. liii p. 385).

[40] For details regarding the wood for tooth-stick see al-Jahiz, Bayan ii, 52.

The use of the miswak is like the canonical *adhan* a preliminary preparation to prayer, it belongs to the *sunan-almursalin* that is, to the practices of the prophets who preceded even Muhammad.[41] And the Prophet says:

"One prayer after the use of the miswak is worth 76 ordinary prayers X." "If it would not prove too heavy an obligation on my believers I would have prescribed the miswak to precede every prayer."[42] And the old tradition placed the employment of the tooth-stick so high that it puts the following words into the mouth of the Prophet. "God has ordered me the *siwak* with such insistance that I am almost afraid that he has commanded it as a revealed law."[43] In a humorous way it is said that the angel Gabriel so frequently enjoined the siwak upon the obedient Prophet that the latter feared the loss of his teeth by too frequent rubbing. One of the ten effects of the siwak is to excite the anger of Satan; and this is agreeable to Allah (*mardat-lil-rabb, mushita lil shaytan*[44])." One special virtue of the tooth-stick consists in this, that it facilitates for the dying in his last moments his profession of faith and shortens his agony.[45] In his last hour the Prophet had the miswak given to him and one of those present relates that he had never made so serious a use of it in his life as in these his last moments.[46] The poetic literature of the Musalmans has also taken possession of this sacred object. There is quite a branch of poetic literature devoted to the miswak. According to the testimony of the learned Shia Abul Kasim Murtadha Alam al Huda the most beautiful poem on this subject is from the pen

[41] Al Yakubi, Annales ed. Houtsma ii, 121.

[42] Buchari Tamanni, No, 9; Musnad Ahmed, lx, 116; Al Shaibani, Athar, p. 20.

[43] Musnad Ahmed, I, 339 (sa yunzal aleyya fihi) ibid, iii, 490 (an yuktaba aleyya).

[44] *Ibid* I, 3.

[45] Al Mustatraf, I, p. 10: al Balawi, Alif-ba, I, 137-8. According to a dictum reported by al-Shafi, the use of the miswak is also effective in strengthening the intellect; al-Damiri 11, 145 s.v. usfur.

[46] Buch. Maghazi. No. 85.

of the poet Anu Haj al-Numeyri (belonging to the transitional period between the Umayyads and the Abbasides[47]).

Now, the high value attributed to the miswak is hardly explicable from the religious data of Islam. It takes us back to the Persian dominion and to the religious uses of the Parsis.[48] It received a liberal development in Muṣalman aphorisms some of which are known to us as the dicta of the prophet.[49]

We have next to consider the reverse of the model. From time to time there were manifest symptoms of opposition of a reaction of Islam against Persian ideas. As a proof nothing is more typical than the change produced in the sentiments of the Musalmans regarding the dog, the most faithful of our domestic animals. It is a well known fact that from the beginnings of Islam, the dog has been looked upon as a despised animal. "The angels never enter a house where there is a dog or an idol." The Prophet had given orders, we are told, that all the dogs in Medina be put to death especially those of a certain unusual colour.[50] And the theologians of Islam are puzzled to account for the measure. It is related that the Khalif Abu Jafar al Mansur—this hadith is by Ibu Kataiba—being instructed on this point could be furnished with no further explanation by a celebrated scholar of his time, Amribn Ubaid, except, "This is what the hadith says; I do not know its reason." "Because," the Khalif explained, "the dog barks at publicans, and frightens the beggars."[51] It is a matter of doubt whether the Prophet actually took such a measure. For in the Prophet's generation the canine race had

[47] Al gurar wal durar (lithgr. Teheran) p. 179.

[48] Shayast la-shayast x, 20 xii, 13 ; Dadistani dini. xl, 8.

[49] The "companion" Abdullah ibn Masud was given the epithet of sahib al siwak, the reason for this title, which in any case was an honorific distinction, does not seem to have been recognised ; and in place of al-siwak, we find variants like al-sawad and al-sirar which show that the true sense of the epithet was soon forgotten.

[50] Quite a collection of traditions on this subject is found in the Alif-ba of al-Balawi, I, p. 378.

[51] Ibn al Abbar, Takmila (Madrid ed. Bibl. arab. hisp.) p 533.

not yet come to be hated. It is a fact that at the time of the Prophet dogs were found about mosques and their presence in them in no way was regarded as a profanation of the sanctuaries.[52] Even later we notice from the sentences preserved to us the amicable disposition of the Musalman towards this animal whose touch, however, from the standpoint of ceremonial law was a most serious polution. The dog according to a hadith sees things which are invisible to us, *i.e.*, demons. If you find your dog barking at night ask for God's help against Satan.[53] This is altogether a Persian mode of thought, the dog shares this property in common with the cock[54] which also the Musalman tradition makes Muhammad regard as an enemy of Satan and which by its crow indicates its having beheld an angel.[55]

In a sentence attributed to Hasan[56] al Basari (died 7228 A.D.) which has passed with certain variants in modern Persian poetry[57] the practical Sufi or Fakir is comparable to the dog in a manner which at once reminds us of the well-known description of the dog—in the Avesta "The dog has ten qualities worthy of eulogy all of which ought to be found in a fakir."

How does it then come about that an animal supported in the times of Muhammad even in mosques and which subsequently was found worthy by its qualities to be compared to holy men all of a sudden inspires horror irreconcilable with the gentle conduct prescribed by Islam towards domestic animals? The reply is at once found when we consider the estimate which the animal enjoyed among the Parsis in whose midst the Musalmans established themselves. For them it is the animal that

[52] Musnad Ahmed ii, 71.

[53] Apud al-Damiri ii, 334 and l. 198.

[54] Bundahish xiv, 28 ; xix, 3 ; Sad-der xxxi, 8.

[55] Al Damiril, p, 528 Cp. E. Stave Uber den Einfluss des Parsismus and das Judenthum p. 131.

[56] Al Makkari, Geyden ed. l, p, 393.

[57] Chardin, Voyages en Perse ed. Langles, IX, p. 205,

[58] Vendidad, Frag xiii 44-48.

drives away evil spirits.[59] The dead body of the Parsi must have its glance before it is conveyed to the dakhma. In ancient times there were pious establishments for the maintenance of the animal to secure its assistance in crossing over the Cinvat bridge, an act the success or failure of which decided the eternal felicity or eternal damnation of the dead.

Musalman tradition desiring to oppose the religious esteem in which the animal was held by the Persians ascribed to the Prophet the steps for exterminating the dog and made contemptible for religious motives a domestic animal cherished in former times.[60]

Perhaps we can go up much further in the history of Islam to come across the effect of the Parsi elements on the formation of the ideas of Muhammad. This leads me to a hypothesis to which I would invite the attention of those who are interested in the historical research of the principles which have exercised an influence not only on the development but on the origin itself of the book of Muhammad.

Up to now Judaism and Christianity have been considered as the sources of the information of the Qoran. Abraham Geiger's book in 1833 opened the path to investigations which since have been carried out in all manner of detail. The apocryphal literature of the Jews and Christians has also been studied with a view to its traces in the formation of the Qoran. The work of Rene Basset has furnished many useful indications which would stimulate the historian of primitive Islam to advance his

[59] The Bulgarians on the banks of the Volga consider the barking of a dog good omen (yatabarrakuna bi uwa al kalb", Ibn Fadlan apud Yakut I,769, 13.

[60] I am not the first to pronounce this view, see, e.g., Jacob Altarabisches Beduinenleben 2nd ed. p. 84, which refers to Geiger Ostiranische Cultur p. 370, Ed Hahn, Die Hausthiere und ihre Beziehung zur Wirthscaft des Menschen p. 65, " the exaggerated esteem in which the Zend religion of the Parsis held it (*i. e.* the dog) has certainly contributed to the contempt of which it has become the object since the triumph of Islam ; but it has not been possible, naturally, to dislodge it completely from the position which it had acquired ".

studies beyond this sphere[61]. We find that the idea of the well guarded tablet, the *lauh-almahfuz*, on which is recorded the prototype of divine revelation as well as the destinies of humanity, has its source in a Hebrew work, and that the portrayal of the last judgment such as we find in the Qoran has its prototype in the book of Enoch.[62] His relations with the Ethiopian Christians among whom the apocrypha enjoyed an important role are the cause of the penetration of these ideas into the horizon of the Arab Prophet.

Similarly it is not impossible that he had at his disposal Persian notions. It is not for the first time that the subject is mentioned and by us. It is generally recognised that the eschatological elements of the Qoran represents some loans taken directly from Persia over and above the Persian ideas which were spread abroad through Judaism and Christianity. The places at which and the occasions when Persian notions could enter Arabia were numerous in Muhammad's time.

Persian culture was at the door of the inhabitants of central Arabia at the period before the rise of Muhammad. The commerce of the merchants of Mecca which extended into Persian territory[63] as well as the voyages of itinerant poets brought them in contact with the civilization of Persia. Al-asha was not the only poet who tried to make excursions into the Sasanian empire. He was only one of many. And Hira frequented by the poets and the people of Arabia offers in spite of its Arab Court a veritable picture of Persian life. We meet with a large number of Persian words and expressions in the ancient Arabic language.

The old poets before Islam abound in allusions to Persian life and to Persian manners which they naturally avoided with a genuine Arab haughtiness but which at the same time afford reliable evidence of the knowledge which the Arabs had regarding

[61] Les Apocryphes ethiopiens, by Rene Basset, lx, p. 12 and 22.

[62] The Book of Enoch 1, 6, 8.

[63] Aghani VI, p. 93,12 Abu Sufyan sent his caravans with merchandise of he Kureshites ila ard al Ajam as far as the land of the Persians. As regards the predatory incursions into the Persian territory see Ibn Hisham, p. 938,2.

the foreigners.[64] Aus ibn Hajar, a pre-Islamic poet, to stigmatise the family life of his enemy, brands it with the expression *farisiyya*. From the beginning of the Christian era, Persians were exploiting gold mines in Arabia.[65] As for the influence which these Persians could exercise on the Arab population, we may judge of it by the fact that a portion of an Arab tribe settled in Bahrin, the Banu Ijl[66], became completely nationalised Persians. At the time of the rise of Muhammad, Yemen was specially under the Sasanide influence. We know by their names the Persian officials who exercised authority in the name of the Sasanides in south Arabia in the Prophet's epoch. We are justified in holding that the commerce between the north and south Arabia was not confined to the fine stuffs woven[67] in the south. It was not confined to the wine imported from Yemen and Hadramaut rich in [68]grapes and the celebrated vineyards of which are so frequently mentioned by the poets.

There was no want of opportunity for the religion of Persia to act upon the thought of the founder of Islam. In fact the Prophet knew the *majus* and places them on the same line with the Jews, Sabians and Christians, as opposed to those who practised idolatry (Surat xxi, 17). The *majus* were assuredly not so numerous around him to enable him to observe their religious system as well as that of the Jews and Christians about whom their ministers, Habr and Ruhban, supplied the Prophet with direct information. For him who was dominated by the idea of absolute monotheism, the idea of God restricted by the magian dualism could not prove a source of religious thought. Such sources there were in the other religious systems by which

[64] Muhammed. Studien I, p. 102.

[65] Cp. Glaser. Skizze der Geschite und Geographie Arabiens ii, p. 193.

[66] The passages quoted in Muham, Stud. I, p. 103 note 4.

[67] Masudi, Tanbih ed. de Goeje p. 281, 16.

[68] Muller-Mordtmann, Sudarabische Denkmaler p. 87 ; Halvey Journal Asiat. 1872, I. p. 524.

he was surrounded and which he held to be degenerate forms of the original *din-Ibrahim*, the creed of Abraham.[69]

The persecutions which were later set on foot against unbelievers and heretics under the Abbasides with Persian influence may be traced to the words of the Qoran. The kafir of the Qoran is not a copy of the unbeliever and the heretic as they are presented in Judaism and Christianity. Muhammad has here introduced the idea of *material impurity*. This is the Parsi spirit: "A wicked biped, for example, an impious Ashemaogha defiles the creations of the God Spirit by direct contact, defiles them by in direct contact." [70] A conception of this kind must have hovered over the cradle of the Qoranic dictum *Innama-l-mushrikina najisun*, verily the polytheists are *impure*. This maxim was originally taken literally only in theory and the old exegesis—Ibn Abbas is the authority—comments word for word on the sentence of the Qoran (Surat ix, 28), "the substance of the unbelievers is impure" and adds "one must perform ritual purification after having touched them." [70](*a*) It must be stated in fairness, that the Sunni law has rejected from the text of the Qoran by a scholastic interpretation this hardly human idea and has explained in a moral sense "the impurity of the infidels (najas)." [71] But in the Shiite circles where Persian traditions had not ceased to exercise more pronounced influence the literal sense has been preserved in all its rigour and in every Shiite code we find kafir cited as one of the ten causes of ritualistic impurity (deh najasat).[72]

[69] The Persians also consider the true religion to have been from very remote antiquity. They call the religion paoiryo tkaesha which was primitive and existed long before the advent of Zarathushtra who only re-established it (Sacred Books xxiv p. 87). The same conception appears in Firdausi's din-i-kuhen.

[70] Vendid fargard v. 37.

[70] (*a*) See the old exegetical views cited in the Kasshaf ad locum.

[71] For ampler information cp. my Zahiriten p. 61-63.

[72] Droit Musalman 1. p. 17 art 267 et seq.

We will not yield to the temptation of looking for the prototype of *zalim* in the Persian *sastaran*, oppressor, but I will proceed to give an example of what I have called latent Persian influence. The Friday of the Musalmans is an imitation of the Biblical sabbath. It is, however, distinguished on an essential point from the Biblical institution. The latter is intended to recall continually the divine work of creation, as completed in six days. It is a day of repose for man and no work must be done on that day because the work of creation of the world was achieved on that day.

Muhammad likewise wanted to maintain among his faithful a belief in the work of the creation in six days; but his Friday is not the day commemorative of it. It is neither the sabbath, the day of repose, nor a day of preparation for the sabbath. It is a day of assemblage for a weekly celebration of the cult. From the commencement it has never been considered a day of repose. "O believers," says Muhammad in the Qoran (lxii, 9-10) "when you are called to prayer on the day of meeting hasten to occupy yourself with God and give up sloth; when the prayer is finished go where you like and look for the gifts of divine favour." The Prophet absolutely repudiates the idea that God rested from his work of creation. This notion is so deeply rooted in the Musalman conscience that he has always considered as a direct polemic against the Jews these words of the Qoran, "We have created heaven and earth and whatever is between them in six days and fatigue has not come over us, *wa ma massana min lughubin* (L. 37).

Now according to the Parsi doctrine the universe was created in six periods[73] and festivals were instituted in remembrance of each of the six periods of creation but not one of them to celebrate the creation of the whole world; so that there is no holy day resembling the sabbath of the Jews. The Parsi theologians combated the Jewish conception of sabbath and especially the idea that God took repose after the work of creation.

[73] Le Zend-avesta translated by J. Darmesteter I. p. 37; III, p. 57.

The pazand document which is made known to us by Darmesteter[74] and in which the polemic of the Parsis against the institution of the sabbath has become the expression of a dogma dates in fact from the 9th century, but it is probable that it is but a reflex of older theological discussions.

This opposition to the biblical story of the creation does not seem to have escaped the knowledge of the Arabian Prophet. His spirit was strongly permeated with the idea of the omnipotence of God. This was the *idee mere* which filled his soul. Hence he enthusiastically seized the occasion in adopting the institution of the sabbath to differentiate it by energetic protest against the notion of a god who *takes repose*.

[74] Revue des Etudes juives xviii p. 9 No. 102.

NOTE (By The Translator) TO INFLUENCE OF PARSISM ON ISLAM.

When Muhammad began to preach his new religion a man of his own tribe called Nodar showed the most uncompromising hostility to him, says ibn Ishaq in his life of the Prophet, called *Sirat-ul-Rasul.* Nodar had lived a long time at Hira which was the centre of Sasanian influence in Arabia and he was acquainted with the legendary history of the Persians especially the extraordinary adventures of Rustam and Isphandiyar. In other words he seems to have known the *Khutai Namak* the Pahlavi source of the Shahname. When Muhammad assembled his audience and recited before them the Suras which the angel Gabrial had revealed to him, Nodar would mix with the crowd and cry " Now come along Koreshites, let me tell you a story which I believe and which is more beautiful than the one he has related to you just now." And he would recount romantic episodes from Persian History and then challenge Muhammad to "narrate any story as beautiful as mine." The result was that soon after the Prophet revealed the following:—

There is one that buyeth idle tales that he may seduce men from the way of God, with our knowledge, and make it a laughing stock. These shall suffer a painful punishment. And when our signs are read to him, he turneth his back in disdain as though he heard them not, as though there were in his ears a deafness : give him joy of a grievous punishment (Surat, XXXL, 5-6)

Professor Goldziher's most elaborate studies in Arabic literature embodied in his *Muhammedanisce Studien* have been drawn upon by every succeeding writer who has occasion to refer to the relations subsisting between the Persians and the pre-Muhammedan Arabs. It is, however, fair to say that the importance of the Iranian element was indicated even before him by a brilliant

scholar, Von Kremer, whose work *Culturgeschichte des Orients* published in 1877 remains unsurpassed. Brokelmann in his standard History of Arabic literature takes every opportunity to record the parentage of the historian, poet, philologist or traditionalist, who being an Iranian, has contributed to Arab letters. Much biographical material of interest will be found in Wustenfeld's Arab Historians and their work. We may reserve for a future occasion a comprehensive treatment of the most absorbing subject of the Iranian influence on Arabian civilization, but meanwhile perhaps the following note of a very rapid and cursory survey may be read with interest.

Of the poets who employed the Arabic language of their conquerors, some Iranians made an open profession of their faith in Zoroastrianism in their works. Such was Ismail ibn Yasar. There were some poets, and later we will come across historians, grammarians, translators from Pahlavi into Arabic, who still retained their characteristic Iranian names though they had already embraced Islam. Such was Sapur (in Arabic Sabur), ar-Rawiya, one of the very few authors who betrayed their non-Arab origin by defective Arabic. Basshar ibn Burd's poems avow an undisguised tendency to Mazdayasnianism. It is difficult to dismiss him with a couple of lines. He was proud of his descent from the "Kuresh of Persia." He was the leader of the Shuubia who championed the cause of the past glories of Iran and ridiculed the parvenu pretensions of the pre-Muhammadan Arab against whom he composed mordant satires. Abu Nuwas one of the most celebrated of Arabian poets had Persian blood in his veins and so had a minor poet Abbas al-Akhnaf. Ibrahim al-Mausili is known to fame more as a musician than poet. Abul Hasan Mahyar ibn Marzuye was still a Zoroastrian in his younger days. Abu Ismail al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn Muhammad al-Ispahani, the author of Lamiyat-al-Ajam, was of Iranian origin. So late as in the twelfth century we meet with names like Rustam ad-Dimashki, Behramshah ibn Farrukhshah who was murdered in 1230 and Nuruddin Rustam who died in 1254.

The first and the most important philologist was the Iranian whose name in Arabic we read as Sibawaihi. The father of Sirafi was Behzad who was still a Zoroastrian, while the son adopted Islam and died in 978 A. D. Bahman ibn Firuz as his name indicates was Iranian by birth but soon adopted the faith of his masters and is famous as al-Kisai. He is one of seven canonical Readers of the Qoran. Harun ar-Rashid appointed him tutor to his sons Amin and Mamun. His pupil Zakariya was like his master Zoroastrian by birth. Ibn Kutaiba one of the so-called Arabian authors who was a profound Bible scholar was of Iranian extraction. So was Dinawari better known to fame as a historian who in all probability drew his material directly from Pahlavi originals. Al-Marzuban needs no further comment. Al-Mikali was proud to be able to trace his pedigree to Bahram-Gor. As a man of letters and poet he played an important role in Khorasan and died in 1044. Zamakhshari first employed Persian in his writings but was latterly persuaded of the scientific superiority of Arabic over his mother tongue, Tahir ibn Ahmad ibn Babashad as his grandfather's name indicates was of Persian descent.

We need not labour the point that the rich Pahlavi literature was early translated into Arabic supplying models to the justly famous historians who used the Arabic language. "More accurate investigation" says Brokelmann "will perhaps exhibit the dependence of the Arabs on Iran even in matter of style." Al-Beladhori was an Iranian by birth and lived at the Court of Mutawakkil and of Mustain. Nothing is left to us of his translations from Pahlavi including the *Reign of Ardeshir*. Al-Suli was a direct convert from Mazdaism to Islam. The Khalifs al-Muktafi, and al-Muktadir esteemed him for his skill in chess. Hamza of Ispahan was a born Iranian and was an overt and proud partisan of Iranianism. His history is reared on oral communication from Zoroastrian priests and direct Persian sources. His merit consisted in restoring the geographical names of Persia which Arabs had mutilated. It was reserved for an Iranian to write the first complete history of the world in Arabic. This was Tabari.

In the province of sacred tradition or hadith no name stands higher than Ismail Bukhari's. He belonged to an Iranian family of Bukhara. His grandfather was named Bardezbah. In dogmatic theology or jurisprudence, fiqh, one of the leaders Abu Hanifa was the grandson of a Persian slave. The Shia literature of this branch is prepoderatingly Iranian. His name is a guarantee that Khordadbeh, the great geographer, was an Iranian. His grandfather was a proselyte to Islam. Among physicians al-Majusi, who attended on Sultan Adudaddaula, was the son of a Mazdayasnian. It would be unfair to allege that the only remaining literary cellebrities are Bahram Maghribi the traditionalist, the historian al-Biruni and numerous Nisapuris, Ispahanis, Dihistanis, Khwarizmis, who if not pure Persians had a considerable admixture of Iranian blood in them. The English reader would find ample justification for our claim that Arabic literature *minus* authors of Iranian birth or extraction would scarcely be the famous literature contemporaneous with the dark ages of Europe and of which Moslems are rightly proud in the more recent works of English writers like the admirable *Literary History of Persia* by Prof. Browne and the *Literary History of the Arabs* of Prof. Nicholson. Much useful material lucidly set forth is collected by Prof. Clement Huart in his *Arabic Literature* (see the opening portion of Ch. V).

PERSIA.

A Historical and Literary Sketch

BY THE LATE PROFESSOR JAMES DARMESTETER.

(Translated by G. K. Nariman.)

The history of Persia falls into two great periods, the first proceeding from the beginning to the end of the Arab conquest and the second from the Arab conquest reaching down to our own days.

The second period begins with the battle of Nehavand which sounded the knell of the nation in the year 640 of our era, the first from the advent of Cyrus which opens the truly historical epoch about 560 B.C., so that each of these two periods covers, roughly speaking, a space of twelve centuries.

In the centuries which preceded the appearance of Cyrus the plateau of Iran, that is to say, the immense plain stretching between the Tigris and the Indus and Indian Ocean and the Caspian was peopled or dominated by tribes of Aryan origin, near kinsmen of the Hindus. Two principal centres had formed themselves within this vast domain, the one in the north in Media, the other in the south-east in Persia proper. These two peoples, the Medes and the Persians, children of the same family, however, differed sufficiently in civilization and origin to form two separate nationalities. The Medes were the more advanced. Long under the yoke of the Scythians, they had been formed in the school of these rude educators; and having overthrown, they succeeded them in the hegemony of Western and Central Asia extending their power over the Persians themselves. The unequal developments of civilization amongst these two peoples conduced to an unequal development of religious ideas. The primitive religion of Iran, preserved by the Persians, was a polytheism greatly analogous to that of the other Aryan peoples, and more particularly to that of their near neighbours the Indians.

But in Media these primitive beginnings elaborated by the sacerdotal schools of the magians, who developed and pushed to the extreme the dualistic elements contained in the old myths which make the gods and the demons enter the lists against each other, culminated in a regular dualism which is called Mazdaism after the name of the supreme deity Ahura Mazda or Zorastrianism from the name of its founder Zoroaster.

The supremacy of the Medes, founded about the year 650 B. C. by Phraotes, passed under his second successor Astyages from the Aryans of the North to the Aryans of the south, from the Medes to the Persians. It was at this moment that Persia entered the historic plain. From this moment becoming through its conquest of Lydia and the Greeks of Ionia, the neighbour of Europe, it did not cease to be in touch with them by way of wars, commerce, civilization, and its exterior history is a standing dialogue between itself and our West. This intercourse went on for twelve centuries from the advent of Cyrus down to the time when a new interlocutor, Islam, separated these two rivals and threw back Persia towards the Orient.

The first period is divided into three secondary periods according to the great dynasties which by turns mounted the throne of Iran, the Achaemenides, the Arsacides and the Sassanides. The first period is filled by the struggle of Persia with Greece, the second by her combat with Rome, the third by her encounter with Byzantium.

The first dynasty that of the Achaemenides founded by Cyrus about five hundred and sixty, succumbed with the last Darius in the plains of Arbela, two hundred and thirty years later in 331. B. C. This is the epoch of the greatest expansion of Persia. Already under Cyrus by the conquest of Media, Babylonia and Lydia ; Pasargade inherited Ecbatana, Babylonia and Sardes ; under Cambayses, Persia succeeded to the Pharoahs in the valley of the Nile ; under Darius she stretched towards the East as far as the Indus, in the West

she threw herself beyond the sea as far as Greece and Europe. Then she dashed herself to pieces against the prows of the Athenian galleys and shrank back into her Asiatic limits. There she organised under the hand of an administrator of genius, Darius, son of Hystaspes, the vastest empire which had ever appeared in Asia and which lasted two centuries, an immense period if we take into consideration the diverse elements of race, religion and language which had to be controlled and the thirty satraps deputed to distant lands. The civilization of this period is known to us only through foreign testimony or by means of the rather too exiguous national debris. The accounts of the Greeks, historic inscriptions engraved on the rocks by the Achaemenide rulers, acquaint us with the rigid despotism entirely reposing upon the inviolable cult of the royal person, divinity descended upon the earth—a conception common to all the Aryans—attenuated and effaced in Greece by the increasing sentiment of individual dignity; but which in Persia became the sole principle of state, principle of life and principle of death; principle of life in that it was the only one by means of which the Persian state endured and existed inspiring occasionally heroism and devotion equal to that of the Greek liberty, principle of death in that it degraded the individual and annihilated him. The ruins of Persapolis acquaint us with a composite art born of royal fantasy which centered in one artificial and powerful unity all the artistic form which took the emperor's fancy in his province of Syria, Egypt and Asiatic Greece. It is the product of the caprice of an all-powerful dilettante indulging in his taste for the grandiose. In religion we come upon the infiltration of Median dualism brought by the Magians who essayed to establish, by the ascendance of their cult and the manipulation of religious ceremonies, the supremacy of their race lost in politics. Introduced into Persia by Cyrus and by the defeat itself of their country they seized a moment of power under Cambyses, and baffled by Darius they resumed under his successors their

slow but sure advance favoured by the double prestige they enjoyed in cult and doctrine.

For the exterior, the struggle between Asia and Europe culminated in the dissolution of the Iranian entity and from its ruins the lieutenants of Alexander carved out empires for themselves. It is this struggle between the genius of Hellas and the Orient which constitutes the main interest of the interior history of the Achaemenide Persia. One of the historians of ancient Persia of fine and delicate genius and one who best comprehended modern Persia, Gobineau, expresses his regret that Greece should have triumphed at Marathon and he believes that human intellect and civilization would have lost little by the triumph of Xerxes and the East. It is difficult to see in it anything but a mental paradox and an ingenious protest against the systematic disparagement of the East. Whatever may have been the drawbacks and the real blemishes of the Greek civilization, however much it may have degenerated from the grand ideals projected by the genius of its artists on its history, Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea are not so much the victories of Greece as of humanity. It is the success of a more lofty ideal, of thought more prolific and noble, and twenty-five centuries after the victory of Miltiades Europe and humanity are all the greater for it. With all the prejudices and ignorance, the contempt of Greece for Persia, born to slavery, has been one of the most powerful sources of the progress of humanity. We can regret but one thing. It is that in her wars of vengeance Greece was not sufficiently victorious, we mean that her victory over Persia was merely a material triumph which cost herself more than her victim. Alexander dreamed of fusing together the East and the West. He succeeded but half. He persianised Greece ; he could not hellenise Persia.

Macedonian Greece did not borrow from Persia anything beyond the apotheosis of despotism and power, the contempt of the individual and extraordinary superstitions. Persia had on her side to borrow from Greece, triumphant and

degenerate, many edifying lessons, but she could not assimilate the exalted intelligence or the grander character. Alexander could well plant along his progress through the East half a dozen cities named after himself : he could not leaven the Asiatic masses with the idea of Hellenic liberty which was already extinct.

After the passing away of Alexander's empire the unity of the Iranian dominions was once more established for a moment by the genius of the first Seleucus. But it again crumbled away under his nerveless successors. Towards the year 250 the Parthians, an Aryan tribe on the East of the Caspian, allied to the Persians and Medians in race but up to now without a history, threw off the Greek allegiance. Their king Arsace and his successors gradually conquered all Iran and installed themselves along the Tigris at Ktesiphon facing the Greek capital of the Seleucides.

The revolt of the Parthians was directed only again the domination, not against the civilisation, of the Greeks. The princes of the house of Arsace seem to have been the disciples of the Seleucides. Their coins are struck after the type in the language and with the emblems of the Greeks, while they gloried in the title of *Philhellenes*, friends of the Greeks. The Athenian theatre charmed the leisure of the Arsacides. The play of Euripides with the murder of Penthie was performed before king Hyrodias when the actor who personated Agave came and threw down before him the severed head of Crassus. This Hellenism must no doubt have been superficial, skin deep, a fashion merely at the Court and among the aristocracy, without any roots struck into the heart of the nation, and which left no impress on the culture of the Iranians. Persia remained passive and refractory. Of the entire triumphal course of Greece athwart Asia all that she retained was a single personal name, the name of Alexander, a high sounding empty appellation of which it learned the history only 10 centuries later when Persia adopted the legends of the Pseudo-Callisthenes and inserted in its victorious annals the fairy tales brought by the

Alexandrian story-tellers around the central figure of the great Macedonian. But if the Greek influence upon the Arsacides was not deep enough to resuscitate the genius of Iran, it was powerful enough to arrest the indigenous development.

It is not due solely to bad times or to misfortunes and mishaps that nothing has come down to us of the original literature of the Arsacides. We learn through the Persians of the middle ages that the four centuries, which elapsed between Alexander and the fall of the Arsacides, are a huge literary hiatus. The Parthians coming from the borders of the Caspian, themselves neighbour of the Turanian tribes which furnished them the bulk of their armies transported to the Iranian world the materials and instincts of the desert. They could not manage to work the administrative machinery invented by Darius and for the great centralized unity of the Achaemenides was substituted a sort of military feudalism. The struggle, however, between Asia and Europe continued under the Parthians. Rome took the place of Greece, Crassus, Trojan, Alexander Severus appeared in the room of Cimon, Agesilaus, Alexander of Macedonia, a monotonous duel ending in nothing and in which Europe encountered not only the cumbersome and numerous armies urged on to battle by thongs and lashes but also the light cavalry of the desert, prompt to attack and matchless in flight. The Roman discipline and the rigidity of the legionaries more than once gave way before the brilliant charges or the flying arrows of the Parthians. Thus the Parthians left behind more lasting memories among the Romans than among the Persians themselves. For whilst the pride of Rome acknowledged in them their equals, perhaps their conquerors admitted them to a half share of the world, the *Shahname* disposes of their four centuries in forty lines. All that the *Book of Kings* knows of the Parthians is a few vague uncertain names. Their history is a blank, and according to the poet "the very throne did not belong to anybody," and the centuries passed away "during which men said that they had no longer a kingdom on the earth."

This utter oblivion proves to what extent the Parthians had been strangers in the land of Iran. Besides, the downfall of these hardy warriors, half Turanian, semi-Greek, was greeted like a renaissance of old Persia proper which resumed hegemony with a local dynasty which had remained nearly independent under the Parthian suzeranity, namely the house of Sassan. The new dynasty in order to renew the tradition attached itself, by a forged genealogy, to the last of the Achaemenides.

The Sassanide revolution forms a turning point in the history of Persia. This revolution is not only dynastic but national and religious. The founder of the house, Ardeshir, made or reformed the Iranian nationality by the agency, before all, of religion. We have already said how during the times of the Achaemenides themselves the dualistic religion of the Medes and the Magians had infused itself into Persia and commenced to absorb the Iranian polytheism from which it had itself originated. It is difficult in the silence of history to follow this muffled movement of the religious propagonda through the Arsacide epoch. We know, however, that its onward march was not arrested, that the Median preachers remained in substantial possession of the religious monopoly, and that they diffused themselves and their cult among all the Iranian provinces and even beyond.

Then a time arrived when the Arsacides themselves became uneasy and contemplated drawing to themselves the singular forces of religion of which they began to appreciate the power and prestige. One of the last of them, Vologeses, attempted to collect together the fragments of the sacred books and to codify the religious literature of Iran. But it was too late. The phil-Hellenic potentates were not worthy of finishing the good work nor of reaping the resultant profit.

Magism found an asylum and a fortress in this province of Persia where erstwhile it was but a redoubtable and suspicious

host. The ancient rivalries of the Medes and Persians had time to extinguish themselves during the common and protracted oppression of the strangers; and in these circumstances devoid of cohesion the creed of the Magians was the only organised moral basis upon which to reconstruct a nationality. The local princes of Persia made themselves their champions. Ardeshir was a *magus* enthroned. Abdicating in favour of his son Shapur he admonished him to this effect:—"Know, O my son that religion and royalty are twin sisters that cannot exist the one without the other, because religion is the basis of royalty and royalty is the protector of religion." Under his second successor, Shapur, was promulgated the official redaction of the sacred texts of the Zend Avesta. This is precisely the period when in the West Christianity mounted the throne with Constantine and elaborated at Nice its definite creed. The Sasanide period is the most important of the ancient periods of history. For it is well illuminated by a mass of documents, Phelvic literature, inscriptions, medals, seals, testimonies of Byzantine, Armenian Arab, and Persian historians. It sheds its light back into the obscure past and forward on to the centuries which follow. This period is important not for the history of Persia alone but for that of the whole world. Never was the dream of Alexander nearer being realised. Never was the moral inter-penetration of the Orient and the Occident more complete; and it was Persia which constituted the centre to which every thing recurred and from which everything issued. On the one hand it sent out Manichism to colonise among the Christians of the west and on the other it itself received from Byzantium, along with the Nestorian exiles as well as the last of the Platonists, expatriated by the orthodoxy of Justinian, the germs of the philosophy and science of Greeks which, sterile under Alexander and the Parthians, extended their fruitfulness under the last Khosroes and expended themselves subsequently into what is ultimately known as the philosophy of the Arabs. Persia opened itself not only to the west but to the extreme east as well.

China which about this time attained its extreme frontiers marched with her and ambassadors went from and to, the court of the "King of Kings" "Son of God" and the court of the "Son of Heaven." India, which in the preceding centuries had sent out her Buddhist ministers as far as Baktria and made its proselytes among the descendants of the lieutenants of Alexander, gave to the greatest Sassanide autocrat its treasures of popular fables, which translated into Persian were disseminated among all the peoples and all the languages of the west, feeding all our stories of the middle ages and which have as yet not finished their voyage round the world.

Placed in the centre of three great empires of the time Byzantum, China, and India, the Sasanide monarchy continued for four centuries to be the mart of civilised mental activity. The west, once more in our own days, enters the east but only to break it up and destroy. It was at this unique moment that the world witnessed the equilibrium of four divers civilisations, fundamentally different and so great each in its own manner. A like equilibrium was not to be seen again.

However, this brilliant civilisation of the Sassanides came to an end in its turn. Two vices conduced to its downfall: despotism and intolerance. Despotism is the tradition in Persia. Based on the heredity of divine right, it has assured centuries of glorious soversignty under the Achaemenides and the Sasanides. It was to despotism that Persia owed its immeasurable conquests. But it brought terrible reverses in its train. When for the first time since the beginning of the Sasanide dynasty revolt interrupted the line of divine authority, after a terrible anarchy which elevated eight phantom kings to the throne in three years, peace and order were restored. But it was too late. The material resources of the empire were crippled by the convulsions. There was nothing more left of moral resources. The religion of Zoroaster, which in the hand of the Sasanides was such a powerful instrument of war and policy, had exhausted itself in the service of the state. The work of an exclusive clergy, high ir their

morality, extremely refined in their dogmas, but very exacting in their cult, it was a religion calculated to be the faith of a sect not a nation, and in pushing to the extreme the notion of purity applied to the world of matter as well as to the world of spirit, it culminated in a system of casuistry, so that with every movement the hand of man dashed against a prohibition. This creed, after all a foreign importation, ridiculous if it was impracticable, became odious when it was sought to be imposed universally upon all. And in proportion as the struggle with Byzantium became more sanguinary, and Christianity grew apace in the interior of the empire, the state-religion grew more oppressive and pretended to expect from the lay community observances incumbent upon ascetics. The tide of persecution ran high, involving not only the Christians and Jews, not only minor sects like that of Mani, not only socialistic and communistic orders like that of Mazdak, not only free thinkers and the incredulous, but also the lukewarm and the indifferent. A prime minister was put to death because he buried his wife instead of exposing her corpse to the beasts of prey as required by the Avesta.

Hence to a great measure the extraordinary rapidity with which Persia, conquered by the Arabs, embraced Islam. The conquest and the conversion of Persia by the Arabs open the second period of the history of Iran. From the political standpoint the severence of the continuity is complete between the two epochs. The independence of Iran had come to an end. No doubt some national dynasties sporadically uprose which attached themselves to the memories and the legislature of Persia before the advent of Islam. But none of them endured long. It was the Arabs, the Turks, the Moghals, the Afghans, who by turns wore the diadem of Jamshid. At present it is a Turkish tribe, to-morrow it may be the Russians. The internal revolution has not been less profound than the external alterations. Save for a few of the faithful, the old religion has been extirpated, this remnant of the old faith living in squalor and misery in a few villages of Kirman. The religion brought in by these "lizard-eaters,"

whom the great monarchs of yore could not sufficiently detest, has quenched the fires in the temples, torn up the Zenda Avesta and instead has installed in the places of worship an unknown idiom. If the national language of Persia has subsisted among the people it has received and assimilated marks of slavery and has renewed its lexicon in honor of the language of its conquerors. If, however, we look closer into Persia, we shall observe that the national element has disappeared more on the surface than from the interior or the heart and that the country in accepting the foreign yoke, has more transformed its conquerors than has been changed itself, that it has adapted its life and its new faith to its ancestral habits and hereditary traditions, and that it has not been said without reason that for the bulk of the Muslim world Persia is outside of Islam.

Islam indeed as practised in Persia is no Islam at all. It is the ancient religion of Persia clothed in Mussulman formulas. It is not the sacerdotal religion, an artificial work which never appealed to the conscience of the people, but it represents the popular living faith which had nothing in common with the former save the primitive basis on which both were reared. Again in the anarchy of modern Persia religious evolution is the sole thread which upholds the national spirit, and to give one an approximate idea of the life of the Iranians in the second period it is more simple and more certain to begin from within than from without, from the history of thought rather than from the incoherent succession of political revolutions.

On the morrow of its defeat Persia was proselytised *en masse* owing to diverse reasons which resolved themselves into two cardinal ones:—firstly, Islam was the religion of the masters; and secondly, Persia had little hold on the ancient state-religion. Moreover the two creeds had a sufficient number of points of contact so that the transition from one to the other did not offer any serious difficulties either as regards the dogma or the cult or the mythology. The old Aryan polytheism had already arrived in Mazdaism, as near at possible, as the semitic dogma, and Allah was only Ormuzd who kept at a greater distance

from his creatures. The Arab cult in its elementary simplicity was a deliverance with respect to the Mazdian ritual, and from a more exalted stand-point the exhortations to charity inculcated in the Avesta were replaced by more than their equivalent in the tithe to be set apart for the poor as enjoined in the Koran. As for the Arab mythology, therein the Persians found what they had already been acquainted with : all the legends touching the dissolution of the world, heaven and hell, which Mahomed had borrowed from them, some direct, some mediately, through the mythologies of the Jews and Christians.

Of the three elements of religion—dogma, cult and mythology —mythology offers the greatest resistence and is the only ingredient which a people stubbornly refuses to give up even when they believe themselves to be converts to an alien faith. But as regards Persia it transported in a body its mythology into the new religion. Mahomed became an heir to Zoroaster Dejjal and the anti-Christ became Ahriman and the serpent Zohak, the *saoshyant* the son still to be born to the prophet and who is to inaugurate eternal life at the end of time assumed in the person of the Arab *Mahdi* the role of a Vates promising millenium to mankind. The whole creation of genii and demons of *jins* and *devs*, of *paris* who animate the waters and inhabit the mountains and the desert, continued to reign in peace in their ultra-human empire as if no change had come over the temples. For the mass of the people nothing was changed, neither the heavens above nor the earth below nor the infernal regions beneath. All that they had to learn new were two names, Allah and Mahomed, and the eight words of the profession of Islamic faith, a succedanium for the twenty-one syllables of the holy *Honver*.

The reaction went still further and the principles of political theology which had dominated ancient Persia revived and reasserted their empire. In theory all power in Persia appertained to the King, son of God, invested by his eternal suppra-terrestrial origin with divine glory or *Farri Yazdan*. Thanks to the political revolutions Persia transferred to the Arab Ali, the

legitimate heir of Mahomed excluded from the Khalifat, all the splendours and saintliness of the old national royalty. What Persia formerly called in its protocols *shah bagi Minocher*, "The Divine King—son of Heaven" and knew in its sacred books as *Ahu ratu cha* the Lord and Master, lord of the mundane world and guide of the spiritual existence—this is at present included and comprehended in the Arabic word *Imam*, the head, which is the simplest title that could be imagined and one which at the same time is the most august because it embodies the whole sovereignty, material and spiritual of the world. With respect to the Khalifs elevated by the blind clamour of the masses, by intrigue and crime, it established the hereditary right of the Imam Ali, infallible and sacred to God. At his death Persia pressed round his two sons Hasan and Husain and then their descendants. Husain had espoused the daughter of the last king of the line of Sassan so that the Imamat became fixed in his blood by a double divine right and a union of ancient Persia and Islam was sealed in the blood of Husain shed on the plains of Kerbela. The revolution which subverted the usurpers of the house of the Omeyyades to the advantage of the Abbasides, cousins of the prophet, has been the work of Persia. If it did not succeed in elevating to power its favourite family in whose behalf it fought it at least helped to bring about the triumph of its principles.

The first Abbasides raised to the throne by Persia surrounded themselves with Persians. Their first ministers, the Barmecides, were suspected of being at heart Zoroastrians in religion. The days of the Khosroes revived. The Hellenic traditions formerly introduced into Ktesiphon by the Nestorians and the Neoplatonists were renewed with eclat after a gap of two centuries. Greek philosophy echoed in the palace of Baghdad just as formerly under Anoshirvan it had reverbrated in the halls of Ktesiphon. Something amounting to freedom of thought was prevalent, and taste for the sciences.

Thus commenced what it has pleased some people to call the Arab philosophy but what could be more properly named, to

borrow the expression of Renan, the Greco-Sassinide philosophy, for what is Arab in it is only the language, the main spring is Greek and those who worked is were the Persians or the Syrians who resumed the impulse imparted by the Sassinide. Most of the great authors of the best period of Arabic literature, those who wrote on philosophy, history, geography, grammar, all save poets, were Persians. The Abbasides were veritable Sassinides of Arab blood.

With the successors of Mamun, orthodoxy again took the upper hand in the State, for the orthodox knew well that they had no raison d'etre in the doctrine of the Shiahs. But this triumph of orthodoxy coincides with the dissolution of the Khalifat, exhausted because of its immensity. The Persian provinces separated themselves and formed their independent dynasties with the Taherides, the Saffarides, the Samanides, the Bouides. That was the reawakening of the national feelings. All these founders of the dynasties, insurgent governors or simple adventurers pitted against the prestige of the Khalifat of Bagdad the memories of the ages preceding Islam in order to be followed by the nation in a struggle which had the semblance of a crusade against foreigners. The Samanides coming from beyond the Oxus, of a suspicious origin, perhaps Tartars, gave themselves out to be the descendants of the last hero of the Sassinide epoch, Behram Chobin, who had died in exile among the Turks. The Bouides, who established themselves in Media while the Samanides held a footing in Bactria and who during one century held in their hands as the mayors of the palace the Kalifs and the Khalifat, pretended to be the direct descendants of the Sassinides. And Persia had once more a literature of its own after three centuries of silence.

The Khalifs attempted to stifle in Persia the national tongue. The Pehlvi script was proscribed. The language of the Koran became the language of the administration and thus naturally became the medium of science, theology, poesy, and thought in general. But with the national dynasties Persian again acquired the ascendency from which it has not descended and pe-

trated the heart of literature. The poets no doubt still continued the language of Mahomed and the rhythm of the singers of the desert out of respect for the prophet, but they commenced to cast the vulgar dialect into the mould of Arab poetry and a national literature was formed round the nucleus of alien poetry just as in Europe several centuries later were shaped the compositions of Patrarch and Dante on the support of Latin tradition. The Kasida and the Gazal charmed under a Perian disguise, with their fantasies and conceits, the trans-Oxian Corut of the Samanides. The renaissance of national Persian poetry is connected with the name of the third ruler of this house, Nasar bin Ahmed. His favorite is the first, as regards time, of the Persian poets, Rudagi, the blind minstrel of Bukhara.

The school of Rudagi and his successors is Persian only in language, the inspiration and the models are Arabian. Hence it was thrown into the shade by a poesy genuinely national, in matter and material, which arose about the same time and under the patronage of the same Samanides—the epic poetry. Among the villages remaining more faithful to the memories of olden times there survived an oral tradition, a body of stories and legends of a historic nature as old as Iran and which followed the entire history of the land from the beginning to the Sassanides. Already the last Sassanides, as if by a presentiment of the approaching end of the national drama, had collected and edited in the current idiom of the time, Pehlvi, all this epic treasure which had been floating about and scattered. Then came the terrific crash and the Arab and the epic Arab of Persia slumbered in oblivion. The national dynasties resumed the enterprise of the vanished Sassanides. The old now unintelligible book was translated into Persian under the ephemeral house of the Suffarides. Their successors, the Samanides, who overthrew the former, continued it, calling to the aid of national thought the prestige of poetry, and the Persian *Book of Kings* commenced to receive a poetic form under the pen of a Gueber poet name Dakiki. He was slain at the beginning of his undertaking. Meanwhile the Samanides gave way before a new

line of rulers founded by a Turkish slave, that of the Ghaznavides. The national work was brought to a successful issue under the Turkish princes, especially under the greatest of them, Mahmood, the Gaznavide, a fanatic despot, a stranger to toleration but a double dealer in politics, who persecuted the Shias in the name of the principles of Bagdad and broke the last bonds which united Persia to the Khalifat, who imposed the Koran with the help of the Sword but cast out the Arab from the government to the advantage of the Persian. It was at his court and under his mandate that Firdausi composed the Shah-name. The Persian epopee was fixed. The ancient tradition was rescued by the lucky genius of a poet and Persia once again became conscious of herself.

Unfortunately this resuscitation of conscience was not the renovation of her happy destiny. For the ill-starred Persia, the centuries of anarchy and chaos coincided with the great movement which agitated the barbarians of central Asia and hurled them towards the east. As far back as its memory could go, Persia had for her neighbours the uncouth nomads of Turkistan. But in the ancient times she had kept them on the other side of the Oxus. She had crossed the barriers of the great river and the desert, had planted her colonies among the barbarians, there reared cities and installed the sacred fire in new built temples. Throughout the primeval portion of the epic we hear a paean of triumph of Iran over Turan. But now her expansive energy collapsed.

Such, nevertheless, was the potency of the traditions of civilization in Persia, that thrice overwhelmed, three times she asserted her supremacy over her conquerors and had her ruins repaired by their own hands. Three times she absorbed her assailants, too insignificant in numbers to constitute anything save a governing caste, too savage to introduce or support a civilisation, though politic enough to recognise the value of the traditions of Persia The Seljucides of the eleventh century were Turks but their administrators were Persians. Besides, these barbarians had a sense of admiration for the products of the

mind. The great Turk with bags of gold about his sofa threw handfuls to the bards who sang around him. Under the third Seljucide, Malikshah, the cities were filled with mosques and colleges. His astronomers anticipated by five centuries the reform of the Gregorian calendar and Omar Khayyam wrote his quatrains.

On the fall of the Seljucides' ten little local dynasties, the Turkish Atabegs during one century rent themselves and rent Persia asunder. Still here and there at the court of one or other of them an hour of repose and tranquility dawned on some poetic oasis. Nizami wrote his divan at the court of the Atabegs of Shirvan and it was for an Atabek of Shiraz that Sadi composed his Gulistan. A period was put to the anarchy in the XIIIth century by the inroad of the Mongols who established tranquility and reduced Persia to a wilderness, but the Mongols themselves in their turn succumbed to her charm. The ferocious Halagu founded the observatory of Meraga and had the Ilkanian tables prepared by Nasir-ud-din. The Mongols embraced the religion of their subjects and civilised themselves. Another violent and new personification of terror took up the work of destruction and the Trans-Oxian province threw up Tamurlane, who marked his passage from the Oxus to the Euphrates with pyramids of human heads. His son Shah Rukh attempted to repair the evil perpetrated by his father, rebuilding Merv and Herat. One of his grandsons has given his name to the astronomical tables of Ulughbeg, and another, Baisangher, prepared the first critical edition of the Shah-name. At the court of the rulers of Herat, descendants of Tamurlane, Persian thought cast the last lustre under the auspices of a Turkish Mæcenas, the vazir Alisher, himself a poet who formed the Turkish poetry on the model of the Persian. He had for his friend the last great poet of Persia, Jami, the author of the romance of Sufism. He took under his patronage the historian Mirkhund and his son Khundmir, the last of the great chroniclers. Under him Daolatshah wrote his biography of poets. This is the period when the renaissance commenced in the West.

These three centuries of Turkish, Tartar, and Mongol domination developed in Persia a poetry of rare originality such as has hardly a parallel elsewhere. This is the poetry of Sufism or Persian mysticism which succeeded the epic poetry. In the wake of Firdausi followed an epic school just as was the case with the Illiad of Greece. The Book of Kings generated a legion of secondary epics called Námés which along with the principal poem formed a cycle following up its heroes and their descendants in the rest of their history. This poetic movement at first nourished by popular traditions presently degenerated into pure fiction in proportion as it addressed itself to the imagination in order to renew the founts of semi-historic legends which had run dry. The epic turned into the romance of adventures and with Nizami it became a string of mystic moralities.

All that Persia lost in her epic poetry she gained in her mystic. The times favoured the change. The national epic had no longer any sense since there was no longer a nation to speak of. The only question for Persia to know was whether she was to obey a Turk or a Mongol, a white horde or a black one. There was no mother-country either in the present or in the future. The national dream was nothing more than a memory in place of an aspiration. Poetry, devoid of royalty, sought refuge in the ideal, and the ideal was impure and mixed, with particles of reality in it which were of a base quality. For noble elements there was no longer a place in the world of Persia. Hence this indefinable poetry of Sufism which is, according to the author and the time, now an effusion of supreme piety, now a bold effort on part of man to identify himself with God, to annihilate himself into him, the ecstacy of suffering philosophy charged with the thoughts of the infinite; once more the transparent veil of a despicable incredulity which threw pell mell all the forms of religion including Islam, at the feet of royalty;

again the evangel of the epicure, the mystic chain of human love in its less exalted shape.

The mystic poetry of other peoples offers no analogy ; not even that of the Hindus, from whom perhaps the Persians borrowed their first model through the conquest of the Ghaznavides. Europe, too, has her mystic poets but mysticism there has not constituted all its poetry. In Persia, commencing from a certain epoch, it has. It is to Sufism that we must turn for the most penetrating of Persian thoughts and thinkers, like Jalaluddin Rumi, the dervish of Iconium whose Masnavi is the Bible of Sufism ; Muhammed Sabisteri whose Garden of Mystery is its manual ; Saaddi, the most human and the most accessible of them all, more of a moralist than a mystic and in whom the well of Sufism serves only to exalt the light of life with a penumbra of mystery; Hafiz the Anacreon, the Horace, the Voltaire of Persia ; and finally one of the first in point of time and the greatest of them all in most respects, the mathematician Omar Khayyam, who cast into the brilliant and fixed mould of his quatrains all the contempt of science and meditation for the foolishness or the hypocrisy of mankind, all the agonies of a heart under the double oppression of nature and infinity, all the revolt of man against his maker.

This Sufic poetry is the glory of Persia. At the same time it is a token of its decadence. It is wanting in the accent of manly dignity. It builds up the metaphysical grandeur of man on his moral abasement. The theme of detachment from the world with all the beautiful formulas in which it is enveloped is next of kin to egoism, for all these renunciations resolve in a marvellous way into the single problem of how to live and how to live long through the terrors of the Turk or the Tartar. It is inexhaustible in epithets of adoration for its Mongol masters quite as much as for its transcendent Divinity. Hafiz disarmed the savage Tamurlane in the sack of Shiraz

and made of him a patron and protector. It is thus that Sufism with all its beauties and seductive attractions has neither endeavoured nor contemplated the elevation of character. It is the poetry of the nation which has no morrow for which to prepare. It helps to pass away life but not to live.

After Jami who closed the great mystic period just as Nazami had closed the great epic period, Sufism became, as before did the epic, a branch of literature, which it still is. As the epic lost itself in interminable romance of adventure of a repulsive monotony, Sufism degraded itself into endless allegories of a revolting nature. All poetry was moulded after its fashion, a fashion which is most refractory to inspiration when it is not handled by a true poetic genius. At the close of the 18th century appeared as a rare accident a genuine poet, Hatif of Ispahan, whose lucid language and clear thoughts distinguished themselves from the modish jargon of centuries.

After the successors of Tamurlane in the 16th century the last great dynasty of Persia, that of the Sufis, came to power. The Sufis were descended or pretended to be descended from Ali. They introduced definitely into Persia the cult of Ali and the Shia doctrine. This was a signal for the great wars between Persia and Turkey. To the hatred of race and political rivalries was added the hatred of religion ; the Sultan, the heir of the Khalifat of Bagdad, being the representative of Sunni Orthodoxy. The struggle between the Sultan and the great Sufi which led Persia towards the West left her effete and after the reign of Shah Abbas it was ripe for new barbarians. In the beginning of the 18th century, in 1722 to be more precise, millions of Afghans inundated the land, broke its armies, covered it with ruins, and during a reign of seven years slew a million of men. An adventurer of the Turkish race, an arch-brigand Nadir Shah by name, became the liberator and hero of Persia, stretched its confines from the Oxus to the Tigris and

revived in the 18th century beyond the Indus the horrors of the Ghaznavide, and of Tamurlane. He dreamed for a moment to establish a unity of the Musulman world and to reconcile the conflicting Shias and Sunnis into a larger faith of his own invention. With him Persia fell once more. The Turkish tribes by turns supplied Persia with a master, the clan of the Zends, who filled the latter half of the 18th century, and then the house of the Kajars, which holds the reins to this day.

The dynasty of the Kajars marked the entrance on the territory of Persia of a new host with whom her destinies since then have been entangled, an adversary who always advances and never falls back, Russia. Since 1813 while Moscow was still in flames, by the conquest of Daghestan and Shirvan it threw back Persia beyond the Caucasus, which it pierced, and found itself installed on the Iranian soil. Eleven years later by the treaty of Turkmanshai it came to Armenia's turn and Russia alone has the right to possess naval fleets in the Caspian which has become a Russian lake. From that day downwards the Ambassador of Teheran plays the part of an English Resident at the Court of an Indian Raja. The subjugation of the Kars in the West in 1878 and of Merv in 1883 have hemmed in Persia on the right and the left rendering a formal annexation unnecessary. All that we are concerned to know is whether the South, more accessible to England and on which it has already laid its hand on several places, will follow the North or will fall into the state of a common vassal and whether we shall see in our days the ancient division between Media and Persia. Be that as it may, what with the continued aggrandisements of Russia and the intermittent aggrandisements of England, Persia as a political power is extinct.

The political reprieve brought about by the Sufis did not result in the regeneration of thought. But the last century which marks the end of Persia has had its revival and two-fold revival,

literary and religious. The funeral ceremonies by which Persia celebrates every year for centuries the fatal day of the 10th of Mohorrhum, when the son of Ali breathed his last at Kerbela have developed a popular theatre and produced a sincere poetry, dramatic and human, which is worth all the rhetoric of the poets. During the same times an attempt at religious renovation was made, the religion of Babiism. Demoralised for centuries by ten foreign conquests, by the yoke of a composite religion in which she believed just enough to persecute, by the enervating influence of a mystical philosophy which disabled men for action and divested life of all aim and object, Persia has been making unexpected efforts for the last 55 years to re-make for herself a virile ideal. Babiism has little of originality in its dogmas and mythology. Its mystic doctrine takes its rise from Sufism and the old sects of the Aliides formed round the dogma of divine incarnation. But the morality it inculcates is a revolution. It has the ethics of the West. It suppresses lawful impurities which are a great barrier dividing Islam from Christendom. It denounces polygamy, the fruitful source of Oriental degeneration. It seeks to reconstitute the family and it elevates man and in elevating him exalts woman up to his level. Babiism which diffused itself in less than five years from one end of Persia to another, which was bathed in 1852 in the blood of its martyrs, has been silently progressing and propagating itself. If Persia is to be at all regenerate, it will be through this new faith.

This very imperfect sketch of the long history of Persian civilization will at least give the reader an idea of the interest it offers in the general history of human culture. Of all the nations of Asia, Persia is the one which has the most to teach to the historian, inasmuch as the country has lived throughout all its various periods in touch with several great civilizations from which it has borrowed or to which it has lent and which refer

us to it or to which Persia refers us. Intimately connected by returns with primitive India, Assyria, Sousa, Babylon, with Lydia, Greece and Egypt, with Rome and Byzantium, coming in close contact with Arabs, Turks and Mongols, now thrown out towards the West, now hurled back to the East, Persia has been the *carrefour* of races, religions, and civilizations. China itself has left its impress upon the land.

We can imagine, accordingly, what a variety of subjects of study we have before us, which concern themselves not with history alone but with languages, religions, literature and art. In the field of linguistics, we encounter the most magnificent province of study which Aryan philology commands, for a series of authentic records and documents permits us to follow the language spoken since the age of Cyrus down to our own days, in all its developments through the Achaeminide period, the Pehlvi of the Sassanides, the Persian of modern Persia. We may investigate the religions which united this speech with the language of the Zend Avesta and more or less with the Armenian family of languages on the one hand and the Indian branch on the other. This philology will be required to decipher ancient documents, Persian and Pelhvi inscriptions, the Zend Avesta, the medals and seals of the Sassanides.

The religion has a bearing on all the great known religious systems. We can reconstruct by instituting a comparison with India and Vedism, the prime main spring of Iranian beliefs and examine the forms they have assumed in Persia and Media and observe the metamorphoses through which they have acquired the dualistic shape. The philologist may inquire to what influences of the Semitic polytheism of Babylon it has been subjected, search the action and reaction exercised mutually by the Iranian religion and biblical Judaism of the times of Cyrus and the Rabbinical Judaism of the Sassanidea era, determine what it has lent to nascent Christianity and the gnostics of the

first century and the elements it has taken over in turn, and the ingredients it has permitted to be assimilated to itself from the Greek and Alexandrian philosophy. The investigator may draw up a history of the Iranian bible and Parsi casuistry and trace the modern evolution of Mazdaism among the Guebres of Persia and the religious exiles in India. The student of comparative religion will analyse it into what it has borrowed from the new creed of Islam forced on Iran and what it has preserved from old. And finally, the literature despite the immense gaps in the ancient period, presents a vast subject, whether one devotes oneself to the religious scripts of Persia of yore and the Parsis of to-day, or, to the epic or the lyric poetry or to the historical writings not to mention twenty subsidiary branches of research which in reality are secondary only because of the paucity of documents and not their own importance,—such for instance as the history of the Persian art, the architecture borrowed from Assyria, Greece, Egypt, Rome and lent to Byzantium and the Arabs, the painting oscillating between Byzantium and China, the ceramic a loan from the Chinese.

As for the history of the Persian epic, the study belongs in matter to antiquity, in form to modern ages. It represents in continuity the genius of Persia through its entire history and its evolution.

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